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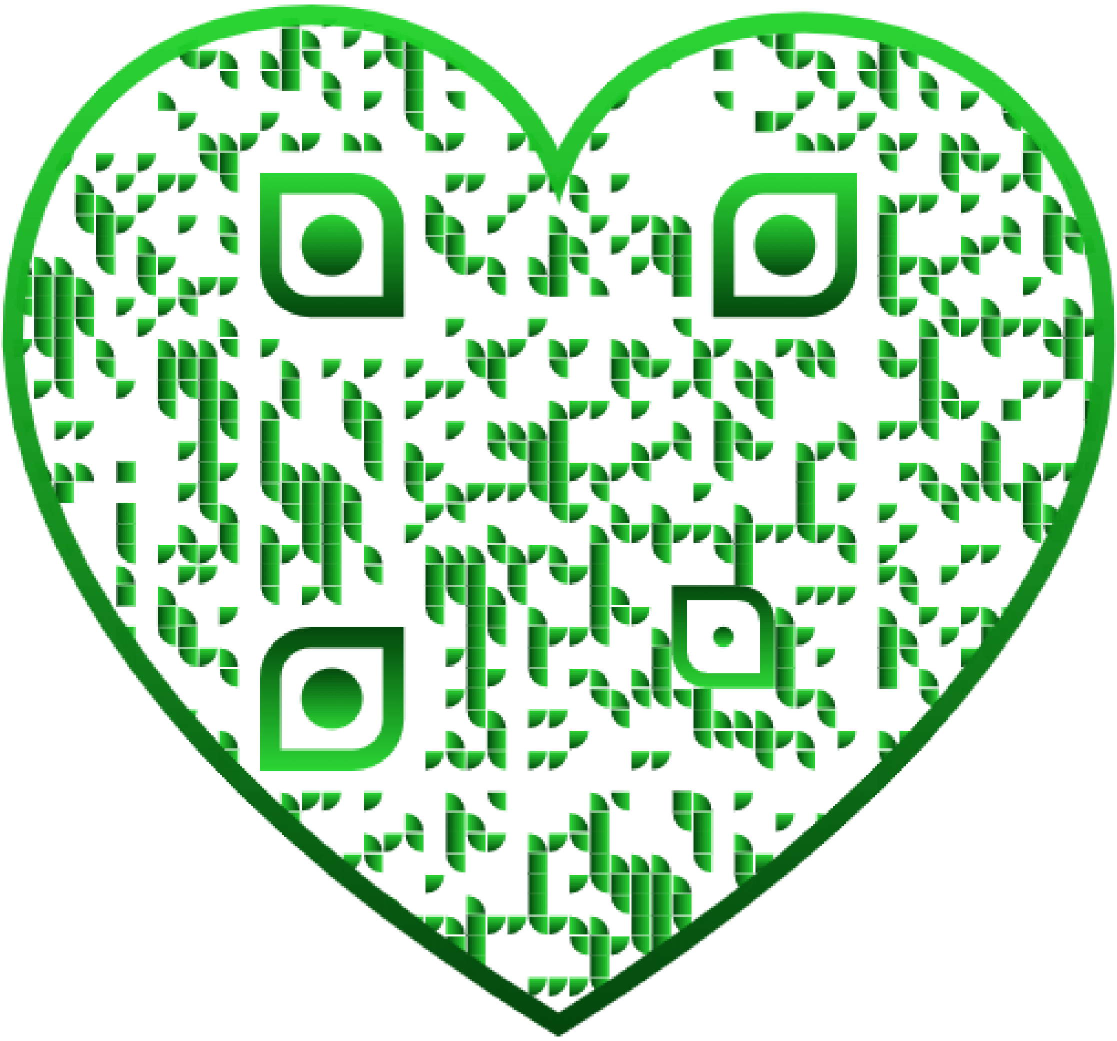

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NOT STEVE JOBS

THE APPLE CO-FOUNDER famously wore the same thing everyday in order to streamline his life and minimize the amount of decision making in a day by one less thing. It's an admirable thing I suppose to be so efficient and laser focused on only the best and most important things your brain should be spending energy on. My brain? Quite the opposite. Sure there's the side of me that runs on logic and reasoning and eschews superfluousness. But then there's the *better* side of me that craves creativity and frivolity and indulgence.

I think it's the same for modernist homeowners. For schedule and budget and functionality we tend to focus on the nuts-and-bolts side of homeownership. The floorplans, materials, and usability. Then there's what this issue is dedicated to celebrating: The artful interiors—a place where we get to flex our creativeness and personality. It's where the emotion takes over and we fill our spaces with things that are meaningful, symbolic and sometimes unreasonable but we do it just because we want to. The art, the color, the fabric and accents. They are directed by the id.

This is also the issue where we celebrate the artists of the era—the designers, painters and makers whose vision have come to define the movement beyond the structure of the building. I hope you get inspired by the homeowners and artists and craftspeople of today that we highlight. And that through their stories, you're encouraged to keep your homes true expressions of every side of yourself.

Jickie Torres

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MID CENTURY MARVELS

THE DESIGN ISSUE 2025

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Above: "The Heretical Carver," an archival fine art giclee limited to 100 copies.

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CHARLOTTE PERRIAND

The Visionary Who Put People at the Center of Modern Design

By **Jickie Torres**

CHARLOTTE Perriand (1903–1999) was a pioneer who reshaped the landscape of 20th-century design, infusing modernism with a human touch. Often celebrated alongside contemporaries like Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret (together they designed the LC4 Chaise Lounge), Perriand's work bridged the sleek lines of machine-age modernism with warmth, functionality, and a deep respect for nature, setting the tone for what we now consider timeless design.

Born in Paris, Perriand trained at the École de l'Union Centrale des Arts Décoratifs, where she honed her technical skill and creative eye. At just 24, she made headlines with her installation *Bar sous le toit* (1927) at the Salon d'Automne. The space was cutting edge, gleaming with chrome, leather, and glass. It caught the attention of Le Corbusier, who soon invited her to join his studio. There, Perriand contributed to some of the most iconic furniture pieces of the modernist canon, including the LC1 and LC2 armchairs and the LC4 chaise lounge, pieces that emphasized both functionality and elegance.

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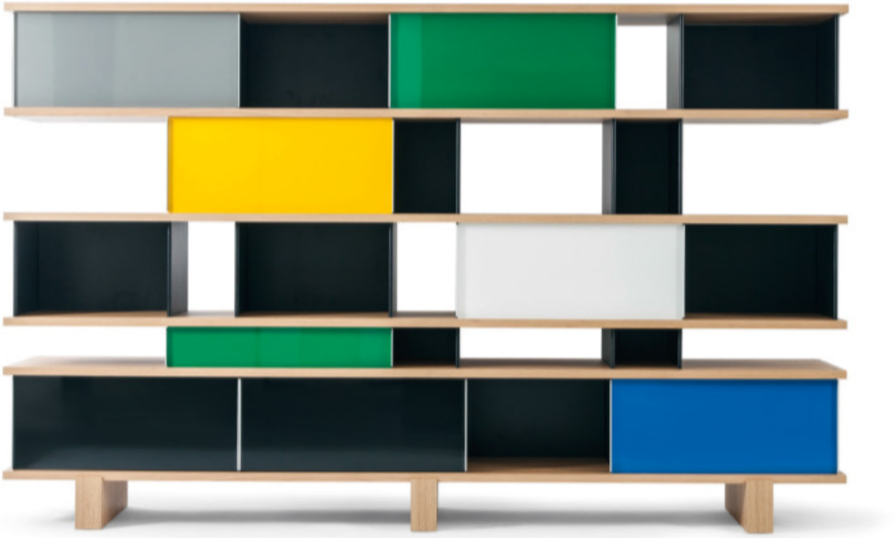

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1. Charlotte Perriand in her studio.
Photo by Robert Doisneau

2. On of her most iconic works, this modular shelving unit was designed for dormitory at Cite Universitaire, Paris.
Photo by Luca Ferri Fattoretto

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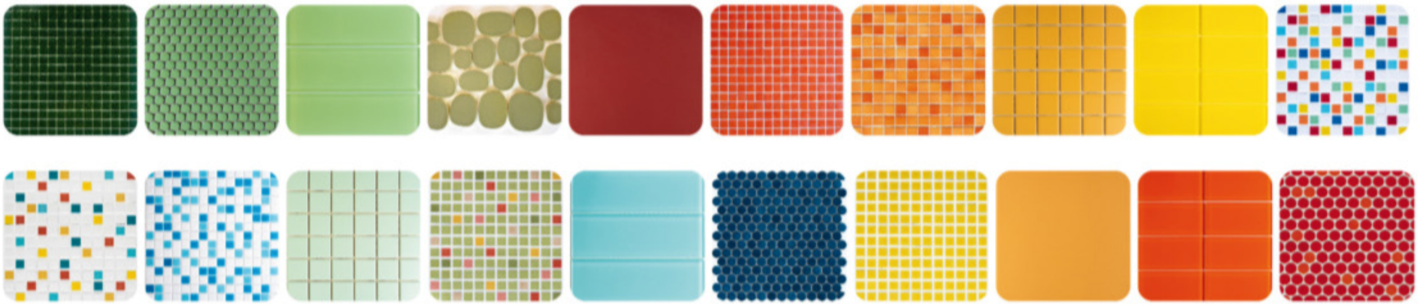

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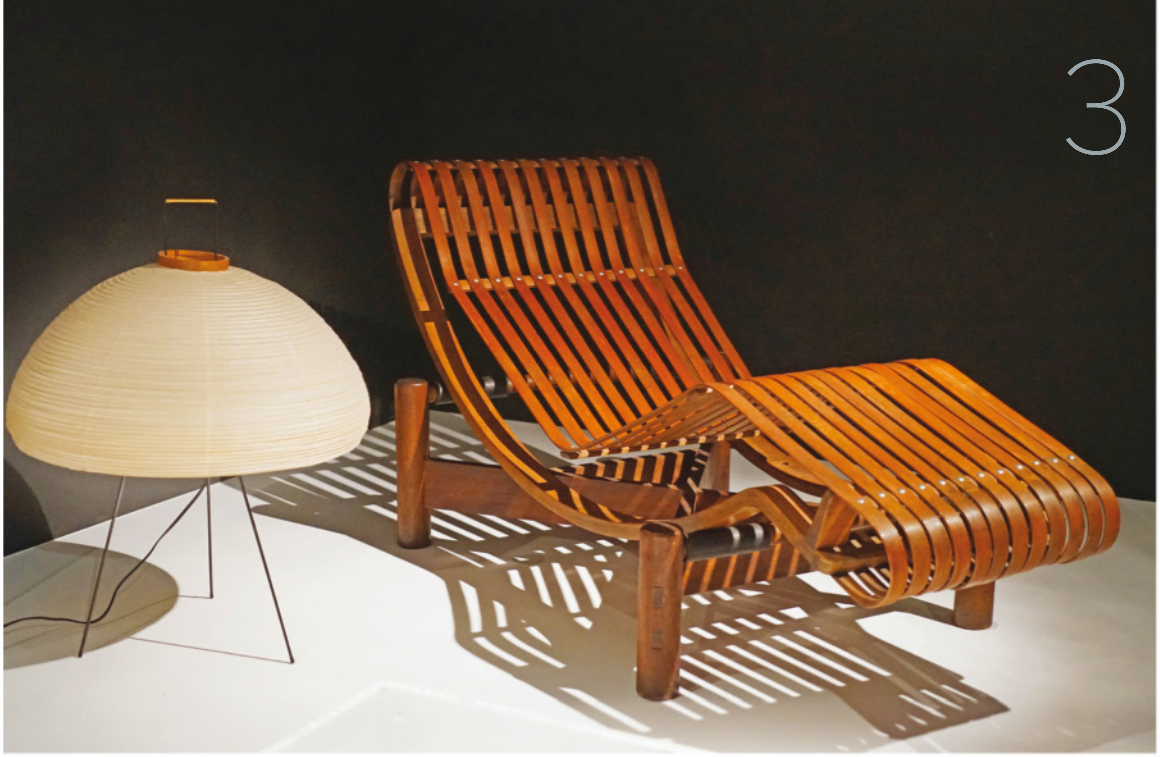
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Perriand believed that interiors should serve people first, adapting to their evolving needs. This philosophy led her to develop modular storage systems, flexible living arrangements, and multi-functional furniture—concepts that feel strikingly contemporary today.

In the 1940s, Perriand traveled to Japan as an advisor to the Ministry of Trade and Industry. Immersing herself in Japanese craft and tradition, she blended modernist rationalism with the country's respect for natural materials and craftsmanship. The influence was mutual: she introduced tubular steel and modern techniques to Japanese designers, while returning to France with a heightened sensitivity to wood, bamboo, and organic forms. Later, her work in Vietnam further deepened her exploration of locally sourced materials and adaptable design solutions.

Perriand's contributions were not limited to furniture. She worked on large-scale architectural projects, ski resorts, and urban planning efforts, always prioritizing the human experience within a space. At Les Arcs, the famed French Alpine resort developed in the 1960s and '70s, Perriand oversaw the design of hundreds of apartments, demonstrating her ability to scale her philosophy of livable, efficient, and harmonious spaces to a monumental level.

Despite her achievements, recognition was slow to come. For decades, her role was overshadowed by her male collaborators, her name often left out of the narrative. In recent years, however, museums and design scholars have worked to restore her rightful place in history. Exhibitions such as the Fondation Louis Vuitton's *Charlotte Perriand: Inventing a New World* (2019–2020) have underscored her enduring relevance and influence.

Charlotte Perriand's legacy is more than a catalog of iconic designs—it is a manifesto for living. She insisted that good design was not about status or spectacle but about enhancing the rhythm of everyday life. By marrying modernism's clean lines with a profound humanity, she helped redefine the very purpose of design, ensuring that beauty and utility could coexist in service to people. ✲

4

3. The Tokyo Chaise Lounge is a product of Perriand's time in Japan. She revisited one of her most famous designs, the LC4 Chaise Lounge and remade it from bamboo. The stunning result juxtaposed her early knack for employing a machine aesthetic with her newly inspired organic and naturalistic approach. Photo by Jean-Pierre Dalbéra

4. On display at the Charlotte Perriande exhbit in Brazil are an original LC1 chair alongside an LC2. Photo by Gabriel Fernandes

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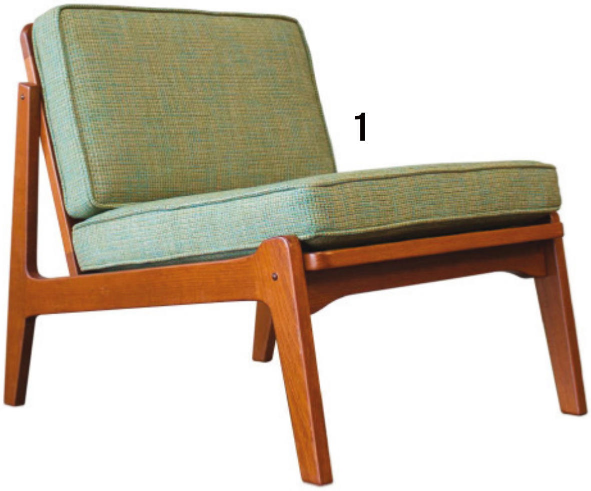
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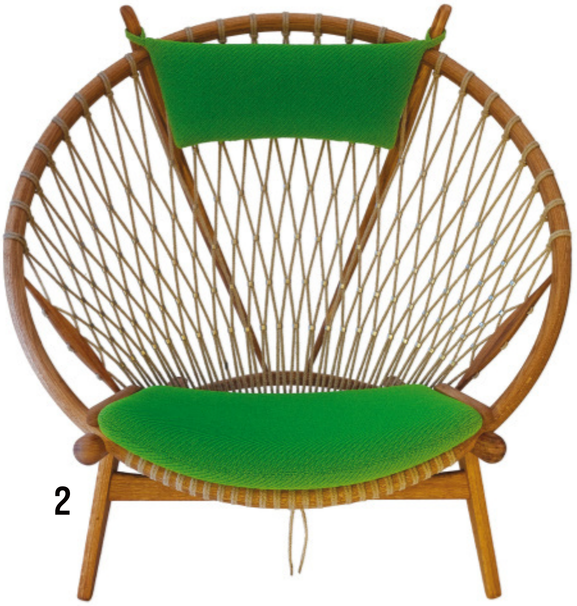
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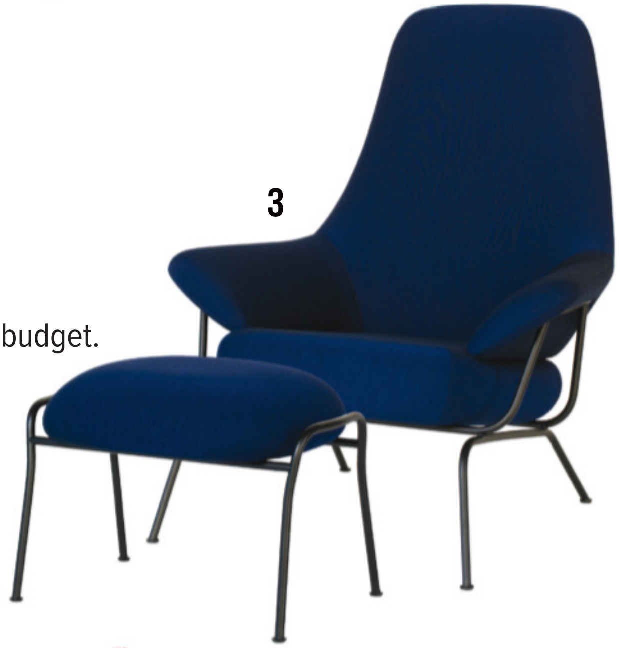
TOP OF THE CLASS

These finds deliver great style on no matter your budget.

By **Jickie Torres**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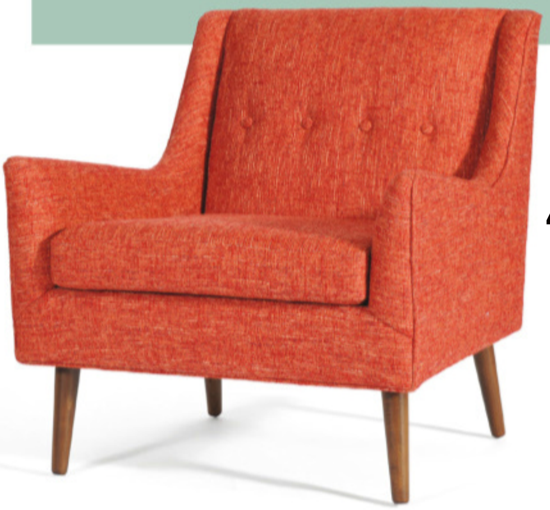
CHAIRS:

1. The Raymore Chair, $1,299. Visit casaramodern.com.
2. Circle Chair by Hans J. Wegner. For pricing, visit pp.dk.
3. Hai lounge chair + ottoman, $2,629. Visit hem.com.
4. Rex chair, $499. (866) 645-6764 or gingkofurniture.com.
5. Observatory Lounge Multicolor, $3,499. Visit jamespiattshop.com.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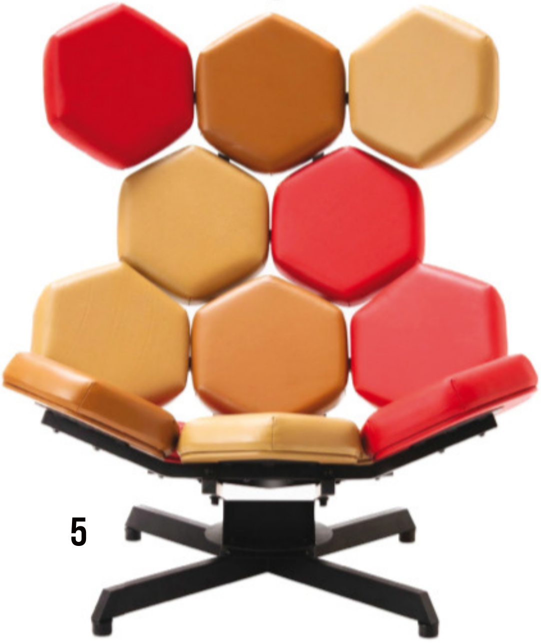
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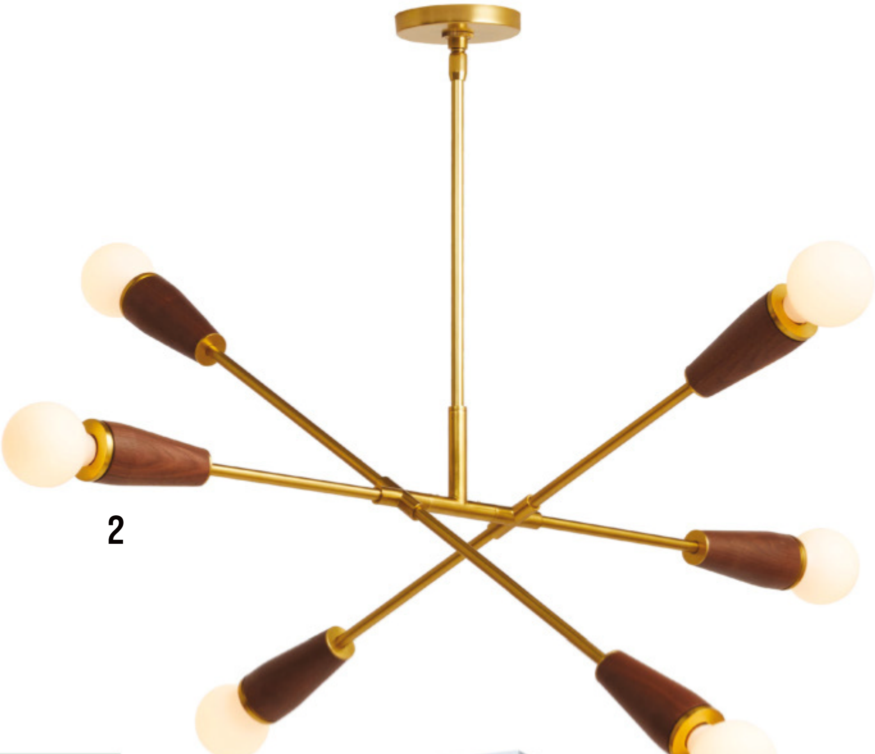
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LIGHTING:

1. Hollis + Morris The Stem pendant, $600. (647) 970-9716 or hollisandmorris.com.
2. $1,299. (800) 526-7329 or rejuvenation.com.
3. Kara table lamp, $75. Visit shop.practicalprops.com.
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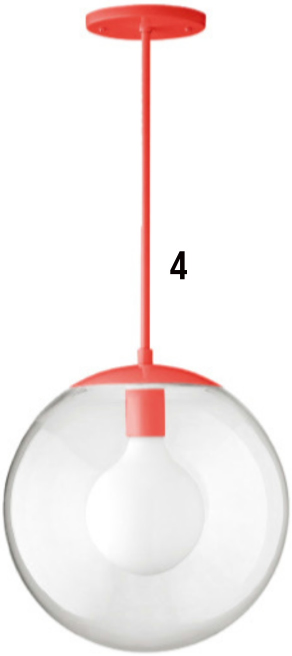
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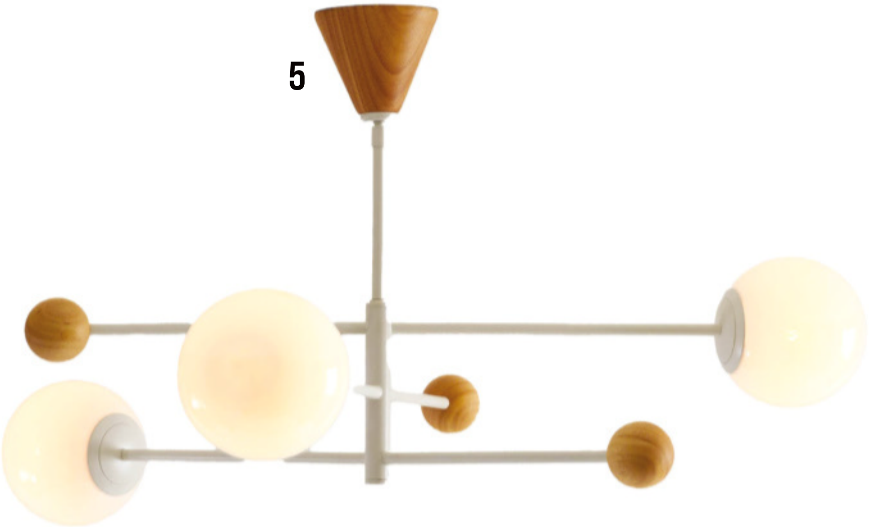
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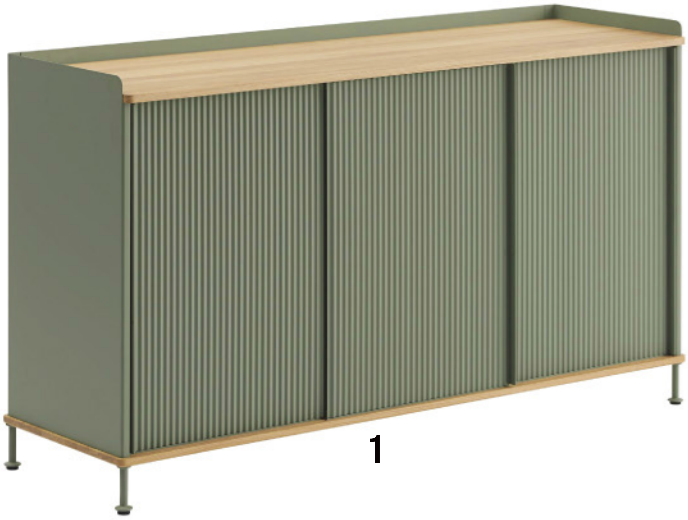

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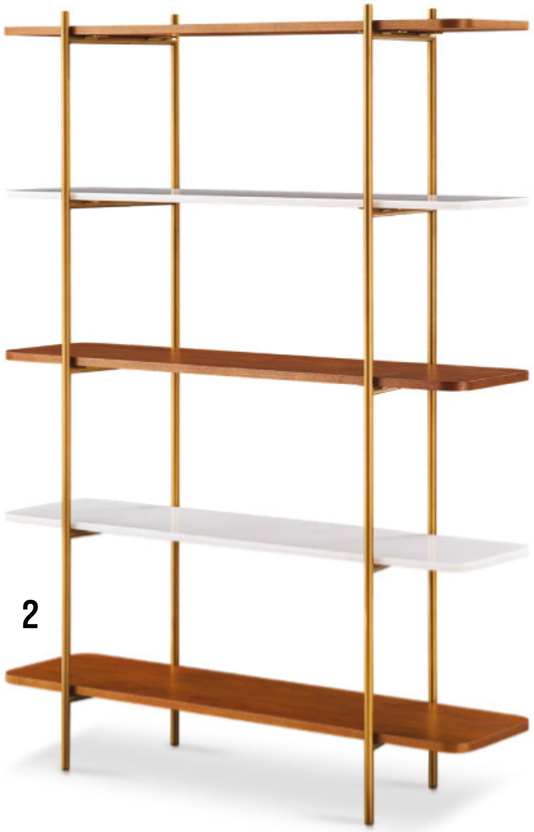

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CASE GOODS:

1. Enfold sideboard, $3,849. Visit us.muuto.com.
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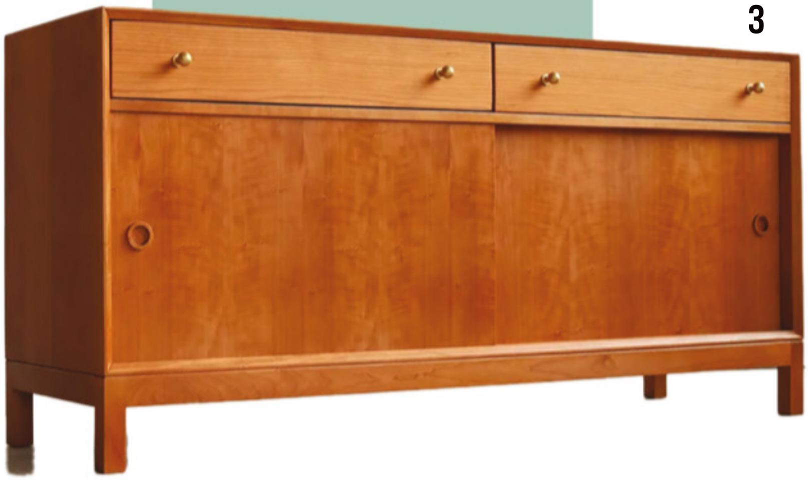

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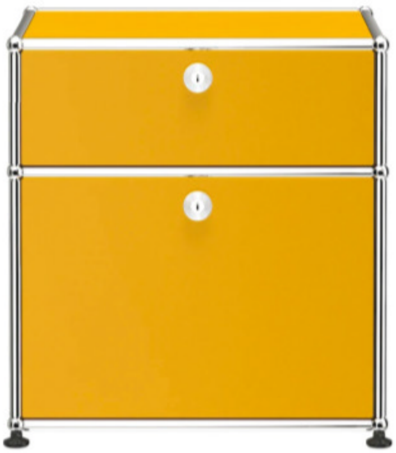

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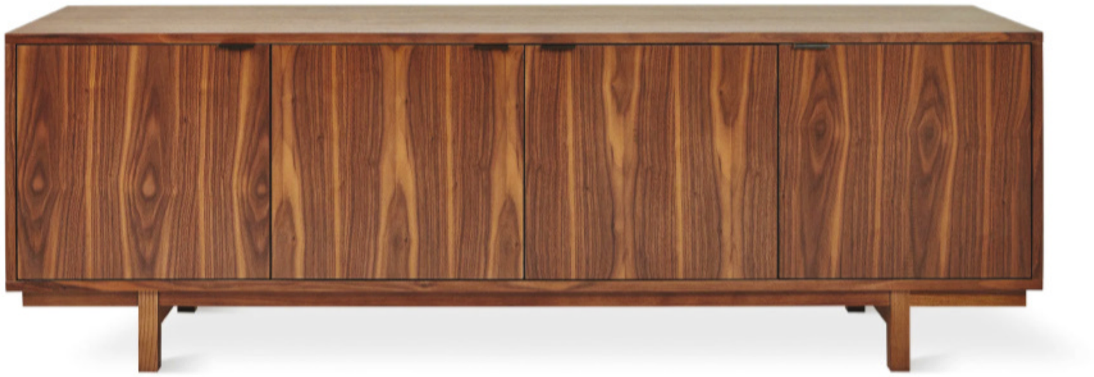

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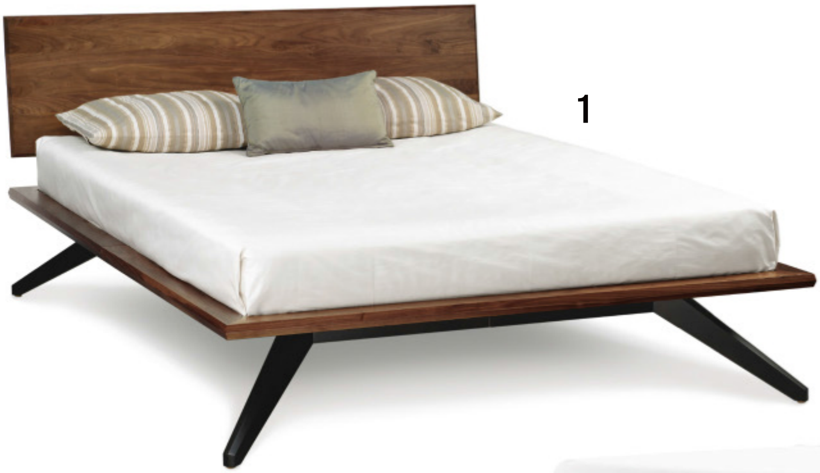

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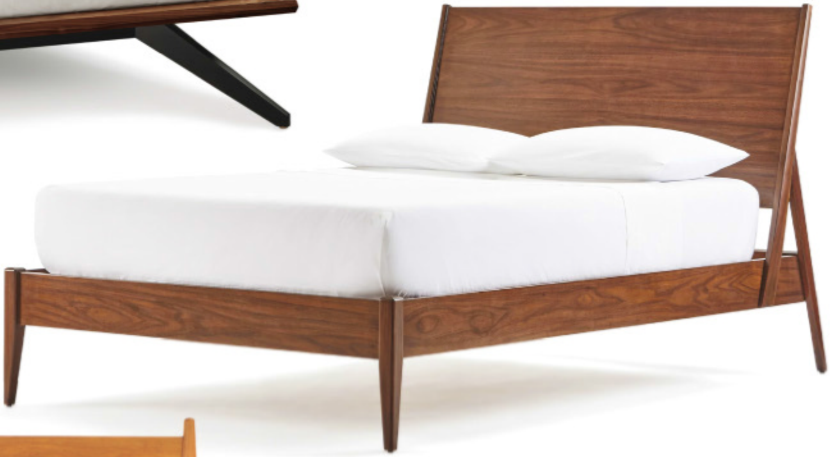

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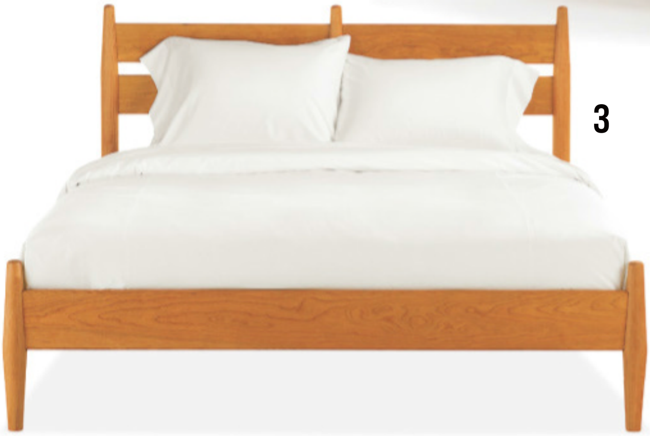

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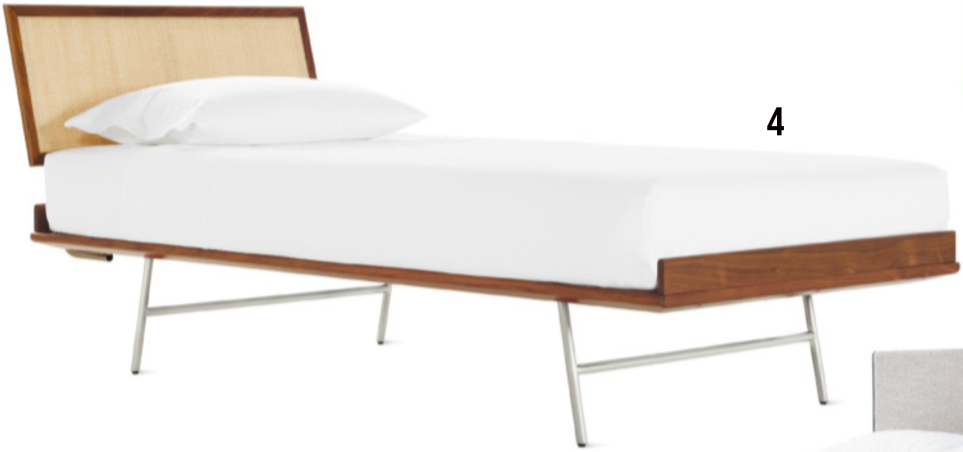

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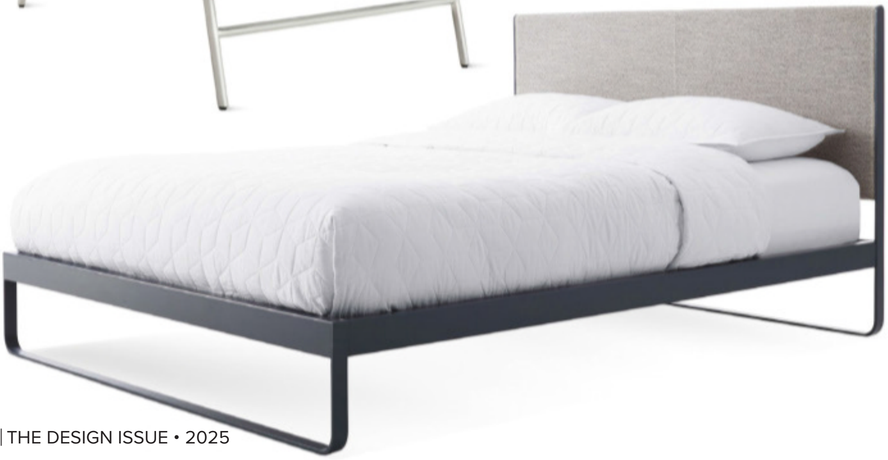

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ON TRADITION

By **Jickie Torres** • Photos by **Henry Jara**

This furniture maker eschews assembly lines and makes his pieces the old fashioned way.

HENRY JARA began collecting and selling vintage Mid Century Modern furniture 20 years ago. It was well ahead of the trend curve that have pulled behemoths like Target and Amazon to the look today. What attracted him to it is the stark opposite of what those big box chains produce. "Furniture from that time was made with quality structure, solid wood, and materials that were made to last a lifetime," Henry says. It was his daughter Alexandra that actually got him into it.

top, left: The company name is rooted in family values."It took me a few days of pondering different ideas and doing some soul searching when it finally hit me," Henry says. "Family is everything to me and I really wanted to include our family name Jara somehow into the business. "Casa Jara" really stuck with me. Casara ended up as the perfect combination of the two. Funny enough, most of our furniture is named after my children or grandchildren. The Tyler line is named after my son, and the Clementine is named after my granddaughter."

top, right: Henry Jara in his studio in Huntington Beach, California. Casara Modern products include sofas, daybeds, sectionals, upholstered chairs, coffee and side tables and console tables. His latest addition to the collection is wall art.

left: "People seem to be more interested in customization now," Henry says. "The number of custom orders we've gotten in the past few years has increased dramatically, and we're always willing to work with customers to bring them exactly what they want. We're able to not only have our standard models but create sectional versions and unique sizes to fit every customer's home."

"Each step is done by one of our experienced craftsmen," Henry says. "Even little details like the temperature of the day can change how we approach the finishing of our pieces. None of our furniture is made on an assembly line in a massive factory, so customers know that Casara means quality."

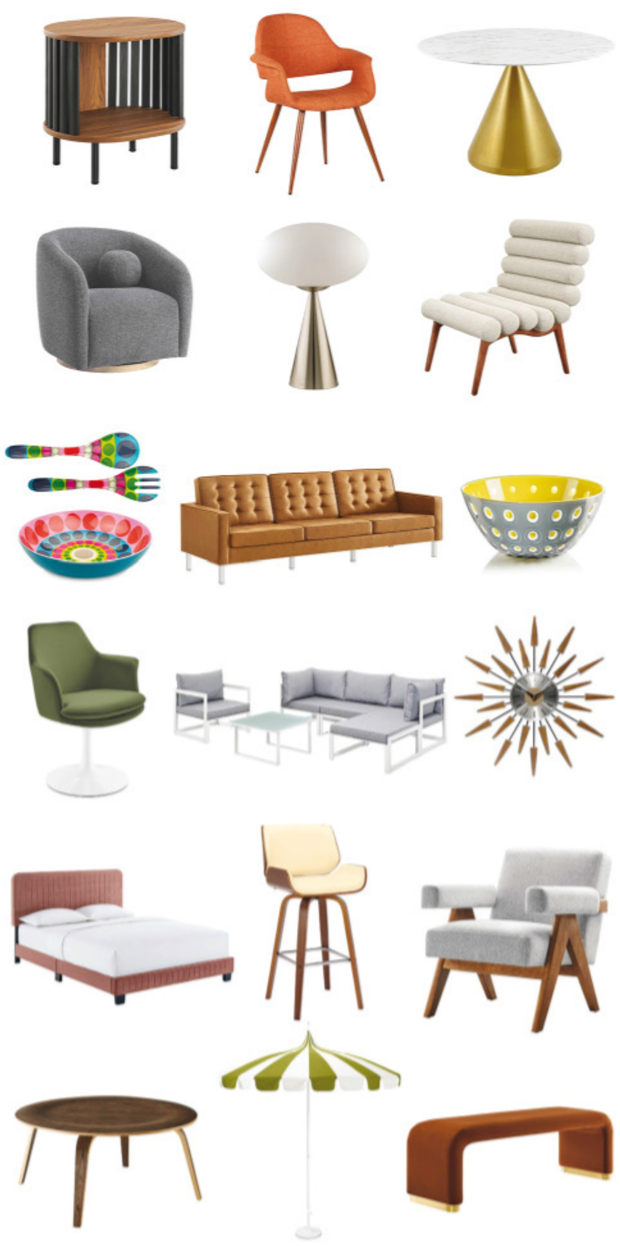
"She began thrifting and selling Midcentury Modern furniture and after seeing how well she did, I realized how unique and special the pieces really were. I fell in love with the simple lines, craftmanship and minimalist designs. I started doing research on the different designers like George Nelson, Charles and Ray Eames and Hans Wegner. From there my love just grew until before I knew it, I was handcrafting it myself."

He started with a single model. "Our signature Classic Daybed, it was a hit. After a few years of handcrafting, I realized how many people were like me—lovers of the midcentury," he says. "It was then that I decided to start a website to sell my products and expand the line." He called his company Casara Modern.

Henry started small with just a few fabric options, slowly growing and expanding into a flourishing business that supports multiple employees with his own facility. He now offers more than 65 fabric options, 35 different products and has a showroom at his shop in Huntington Beach, California. Casara Modern is all about hand crafted, clean, bold-colored, modern designs, made with solid wood. "We custom make our own stain to get that perfect tone," Henry adds. "All our pieces are sanded, stained, and finished by hand."

That handcraftsmanship is the cornerstone of the brand and Henry favors slow manufacturing in the face of manufacturing today which is all about speed. "We take our time, our process takes multiple steps, and we don't take shortcuts," he says. "Our motto is 'Built to Last a Lifetime.' Everything is double checked by me personally before it reaches the customer. We even hand-brand our pieces with our logo as a symbol of our pride in our work."

For more on Casara Modern, visit **casaramodern.com**.



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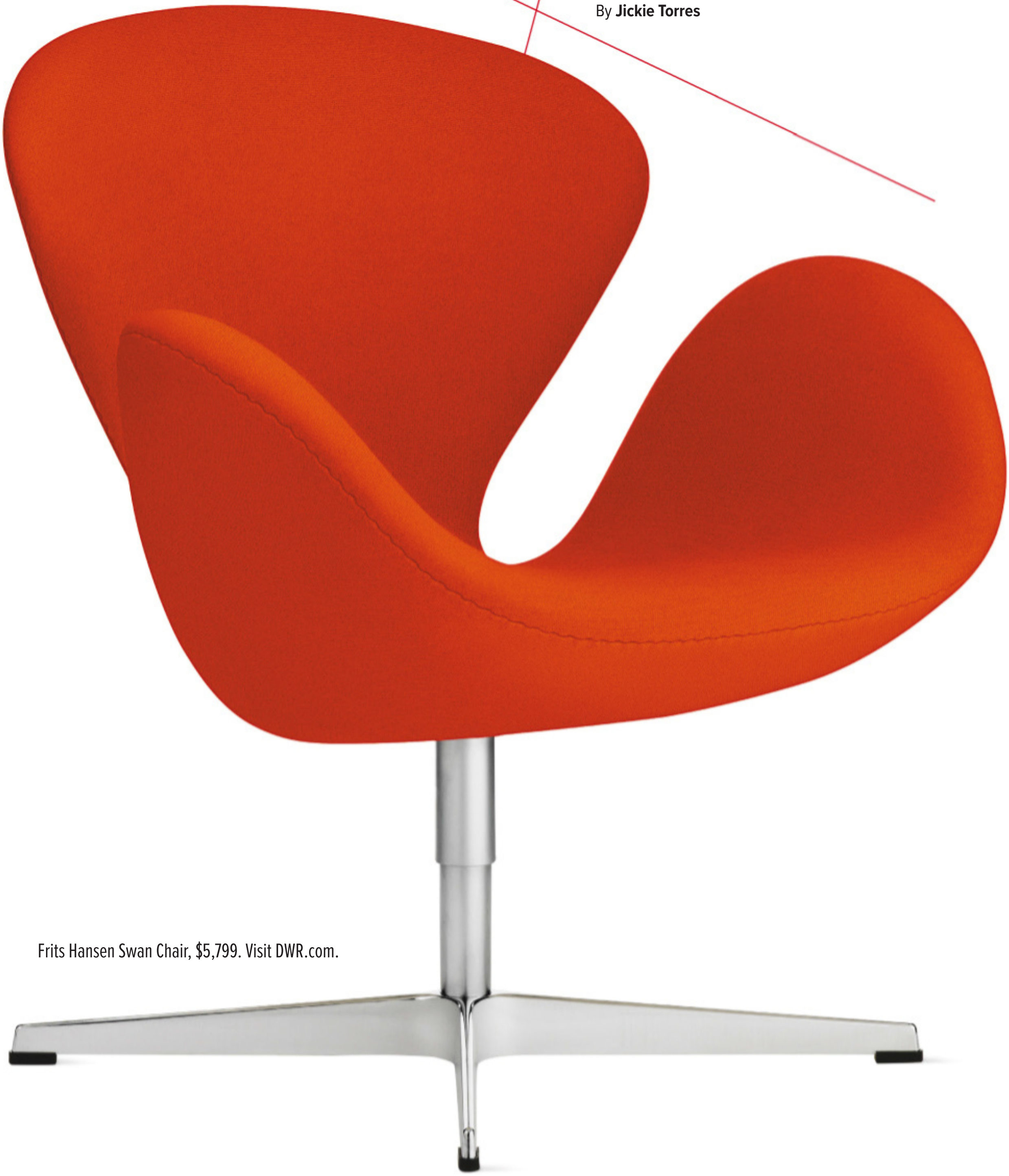
THE SWAN CHAIR

Arne Jacobsen's Sculptural Icon of Modern Comfort

By **Jickie Torres**



Frits Hansen Swan Chair, $5,799. Visit DWR.com.

UNVEILED IN 1958 for the Royal SAS Hotel in Copenhagen, the chair is as much a feat of engineering as it is a work of art—its sculptural curves evoking both fluidity and poise. More than six decades later, the Swan remains one of the Danish architect's most celebrated creations.

At the time of its debut, the Swan was nothing short of revolutionary. Crafted without straight lines, the chair's form was carved from a molded foam shell—a relatively new material in the 1950s—resting on a sleek aluminum swivel base. This gave Jacobsen the freedom to design an organic silhouette that embraced the sitter in sweeping curves, while still feeling light and airy within a room. The chair's bold departure from traditional seating made it an instant icon of modernism, pairing sculptural beauty with everyday functionality.

The Swan Chair was part of Jacobsen's total design vision for the SAS Hotel, where he conceived everything from the architecture down to the silverware. Known as Denmark's leading modernist, Jacobsen trained as an architect but had an expansive eye for detail that spanned interiors, furniture, and even textiles. His ability to merge architectural precision with sculptural playfulness set him apart from his contemporaries. The Swan, along with its sibling the Egg Chair, crystallized his belief that modern furniture could be both functional and expressive.

Where the Egg cocooned its occupant in privacy, the Swan was more open and sociable, its inviting wings designed for conversation. Together, the chairs exemplified Jacobsen's mastery in balancing rigor with human-centered comfort.

Today, the Swan Chair is produced by Danish manufacturer Fritz Hansen, staying true to Jacobsen's original specifications while allowing for a wide range of upholstery options, from classic leather to vibrant textiles. Its adaptability keeps it fresh, seamlessly fitting into minimalist apartments, corporate lobbies, and eclectic living spaces. Collectors and design enthusiasts prize vintage models, which serve not only as functional seating but also as investment-worthy art pieces. ❖

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THE MISSING LINK

Our experts share what they think is an overlooked element of designing a space.

By **Jickie Torres** I Photo by **Jim Brown**

THERE ARE many components to cull together to design a beautiful space: color, pattern, furniture scale and arrangement, and lighting, to name a few. But sometimes, there's a subtle hard-to-pinpoint element that really delivers the perfect vibe. Here, our design expert inner circle offers their opinion on that often discounted piece of the puzzle that can complete the space.

"WHEN DESIGNING an interior space, I think the detail that is often missed is the exterior view. Most MCM homes have large expansive windows meant to integrate the indoors and outdoors. Whether intentionally extending the inside wall material to the outside or by repeating colors, patterns or objects, it is important to help the eye connect from the interior to the exterior and create that harmonious blend to the surrounding property."

Meg O'Sullivan
Chicago Home Curator
Chicago, IL

"BEING THOUGHTFUL about the specific direction of wood grain in cabinetry and wood paneling is a very nuanced design detail. In a kitchen island or peninsula, wood grain running in a horizontal direction can provide a beautiful visual pattern. Alternatively, installing wood panels on walls in book-matched wood grain running vertically can create a mural-like quality to a space."

Karen Nepacena,
Destination Eichler
Walnut Creek, CA

"NATURAL LIGHT IS essential to mid-century spaces. When you're re-arranging a layout and focusing on picking perfect materials, don't overlook the sun. Seek ways to expand on existing windows or add natural light from a new direction. Skylights or light tubes can be powerful. Daylight will draw you into any room like a magnet. "

Della Hansman
Mid Mod Midwest
Madison, WI

"PEOPLE OFTEN overlook the power of patina. A well-restored vintage piece retains traces of its history and tells a personal story. The dramatic rosewood grain of an Eames chair or a Nakashima coffee table with decades-old walnut that warms a room. Those authentic details add depth and soul to a space that brand-new furniture can't replicate."

Nicole Hobbs
Hobbs Modern
San Diego, CA

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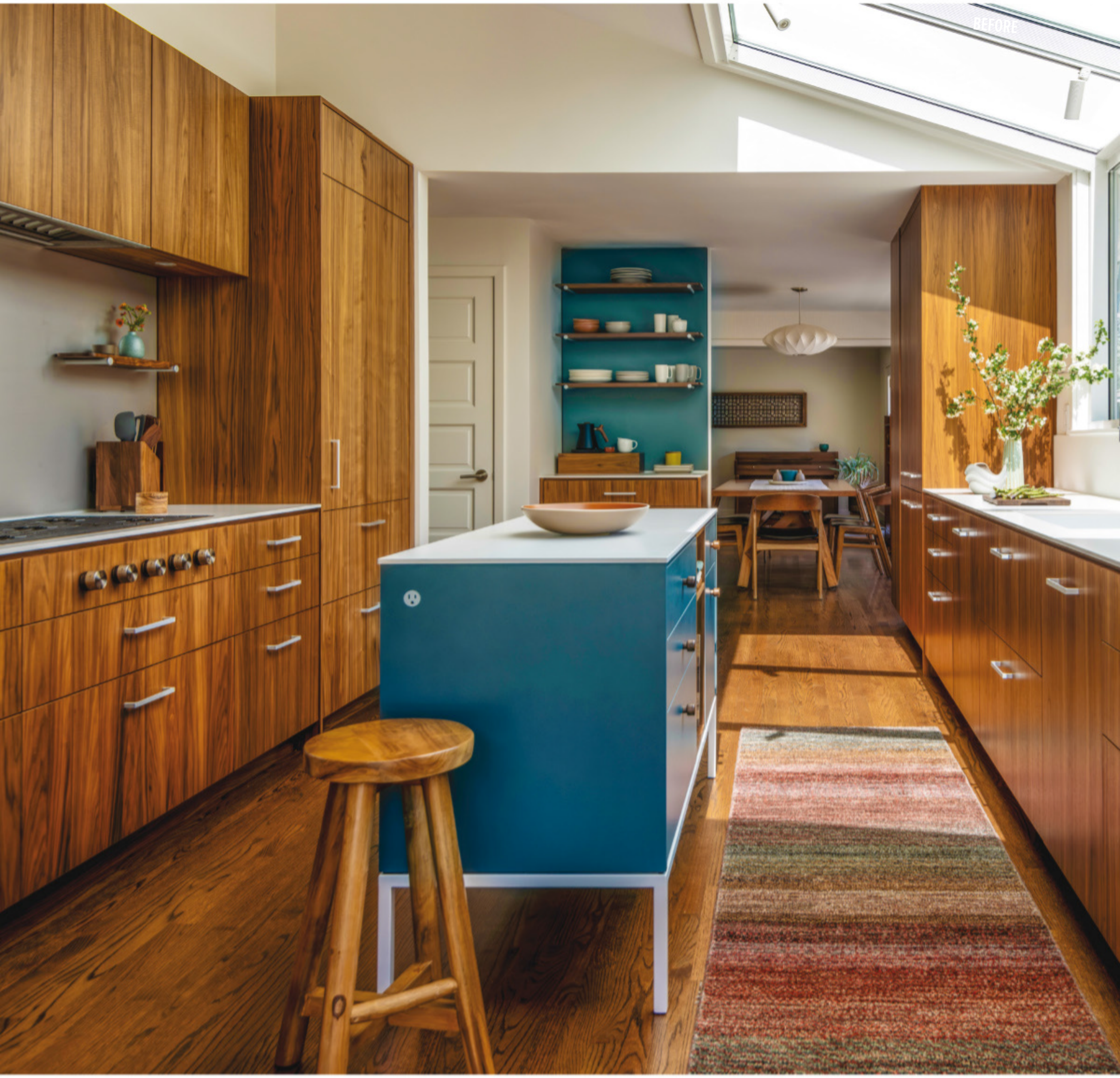
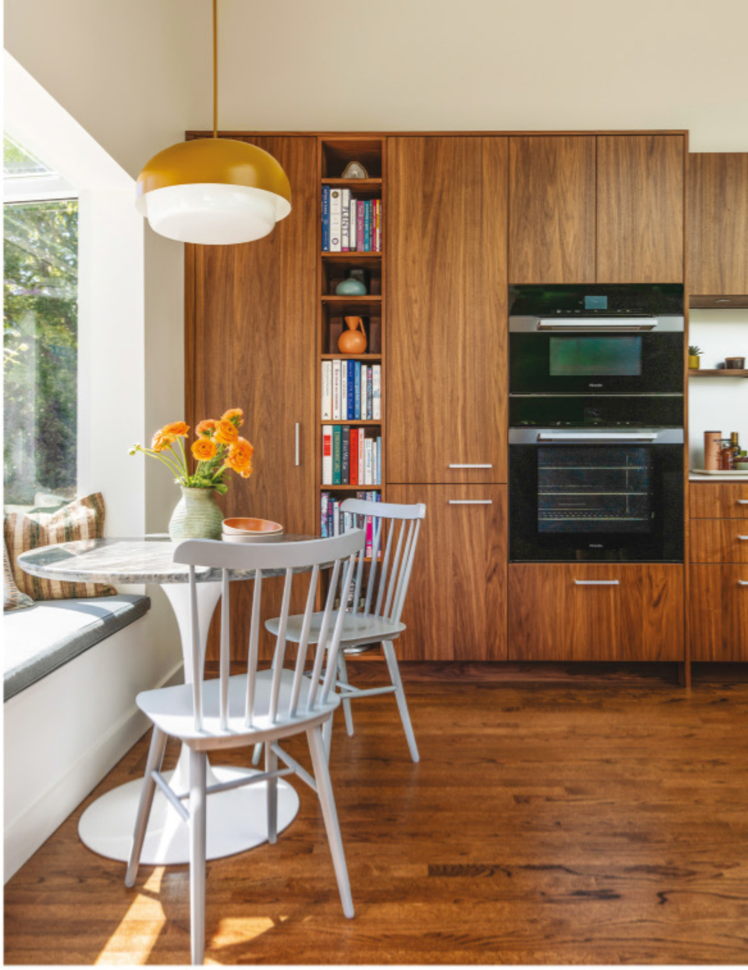
EAT-IN KITCHEN RECIPE

This 1950s home's culinary space was redesigned for improved form, function and family time.

Written by **Meryl Schoenbaum** I Photography by **Andrew Giammarco** I Design by **Kathleen Glossa, Swivel Interiors**



right: "We mixed antique pottery with new Shaker furniture, Mid Century Modern cabinets and one piece of original artwork. Lori sourced the table base from a local ReUse store (these can be fun sources for charming/unique furnishings and fixtures) and we sourced the quartzite stone tabletop from the fabricator's remnant slab yard."



WHEN THE OWNERS OF this mid-century ranch in Seattle, Washington, built in 1959 began their renovation journey, their project contractor, Stuart Feldt of W.S. Feldt, suggested that the clients contact Kathleen Glossa, founder of Swivel Interiors, for support with the design plan for their kitchen remodel.

"Stuart and I had worked together on other projects and after meeting the clients, Lori and Hugh, we all knew we'd make a great team," Kathleen recalls. "They had three requests: to suggest a layout for the kitchen to allow seating for the family of four while still maintaining the existing exterior walls; to assist with the planning details for Space Theory cabinets to help maximize storage and work-flow functionality; and to guide the selection of finishes, fixtures and furnishings."

READING THE ROOM

Kathleen assessed the spaces where the kitchen's form, flow and function could be improved upon. "Typical of homes designed in the '50s and '60s, the dining area was treated like a separate room. Removing a significant portion of the dividing wall would have required structural modifications and a loss of storage space, so we conceived a plan to open the walkway and continue the cabinetry so that it seamlessly wraps into the eating area and reads like a three-sided wall of cabinetry," she explains.

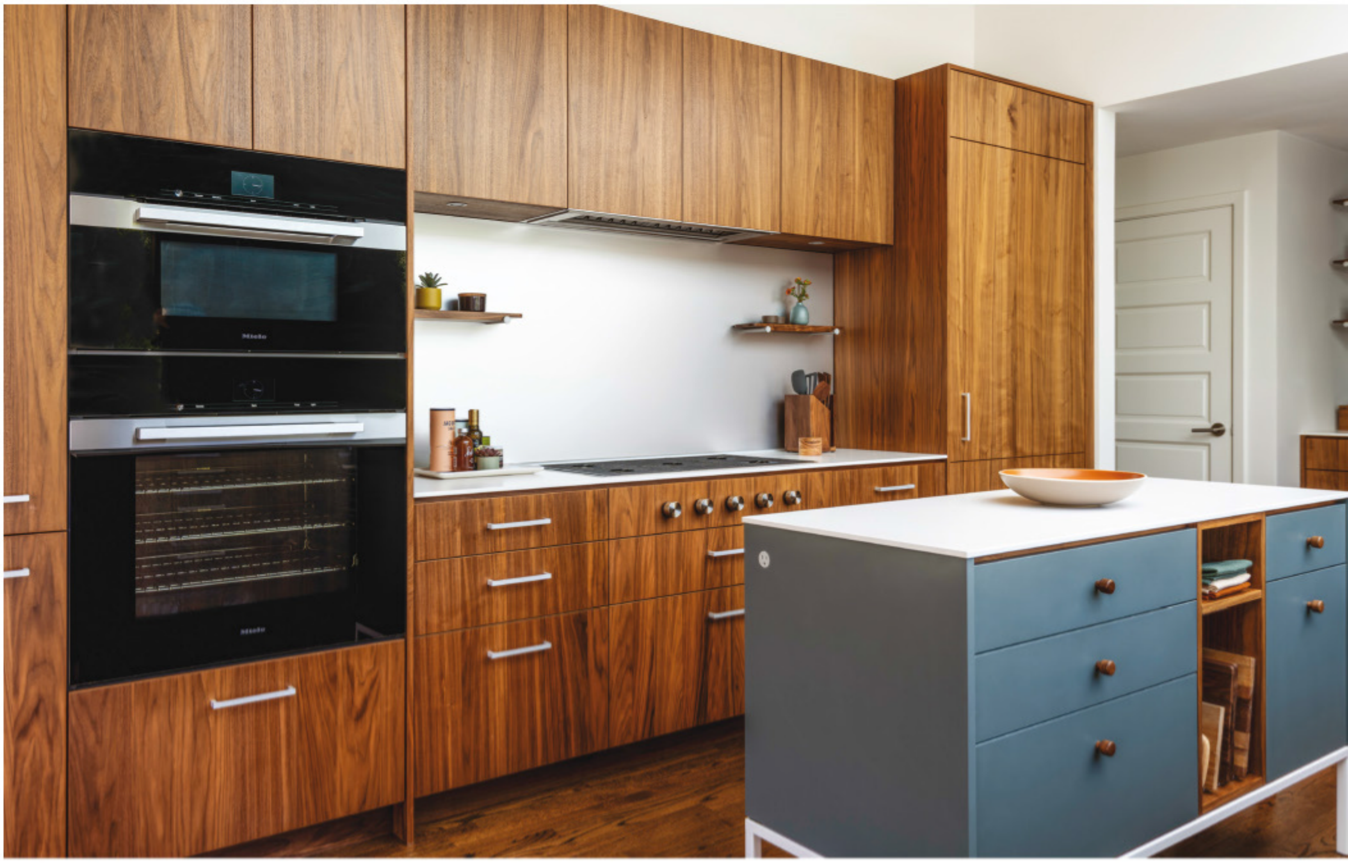
“We sourced components from Space Theory to design a charming custom island scaled to fit the dimensions of the kitchen.”
“We wanted the island to be a fun mix of cabinetry materials combined with open storage for easy access to food prep tools.”
“Stuart was invaluable in the construction of the custom island, it’s the work-horse of the new kitchen.”

The redesign also called for making the most of the room’s natural lighting. “I was drawn to the daylight flooding in at the sink area where a run of skylight wrapped windows had recently been replaced,” she says. “We agreed that any layout changes would keep the windows in place. One wall had a short run of built-in cabinets, allowing it to become a catch-all for backpacks and bags. Since real estate is precious in a kitchen, we needed this space to provide better value for our clients while also brightening up the area.”

Reconsidering the cabinetry was an integral component in the kitchen redesign. “The existing cabinetry included a peninsula that allowed seating for two. We designers call it a ‘traffic impediment’ as our clients needed to navigate around it. I knew that to allow space for seating more than two, the peninsula had to go.”

SPACE PLANNING

Kathleen had a list of key ingredients to add to the redesigned kitchen mix. “We wanted the kitchen to have a fresh and timeless aesthetic while still referencing the mid-century lines of the home,” she says.



“The homeowners were very engaged in the decisions for the new kitchen and had selected Space Theory to provide the new cabinetry,” Kathleen says. “Their curated selection of high-durability finishes makes it an easy choice for clients and designers.”

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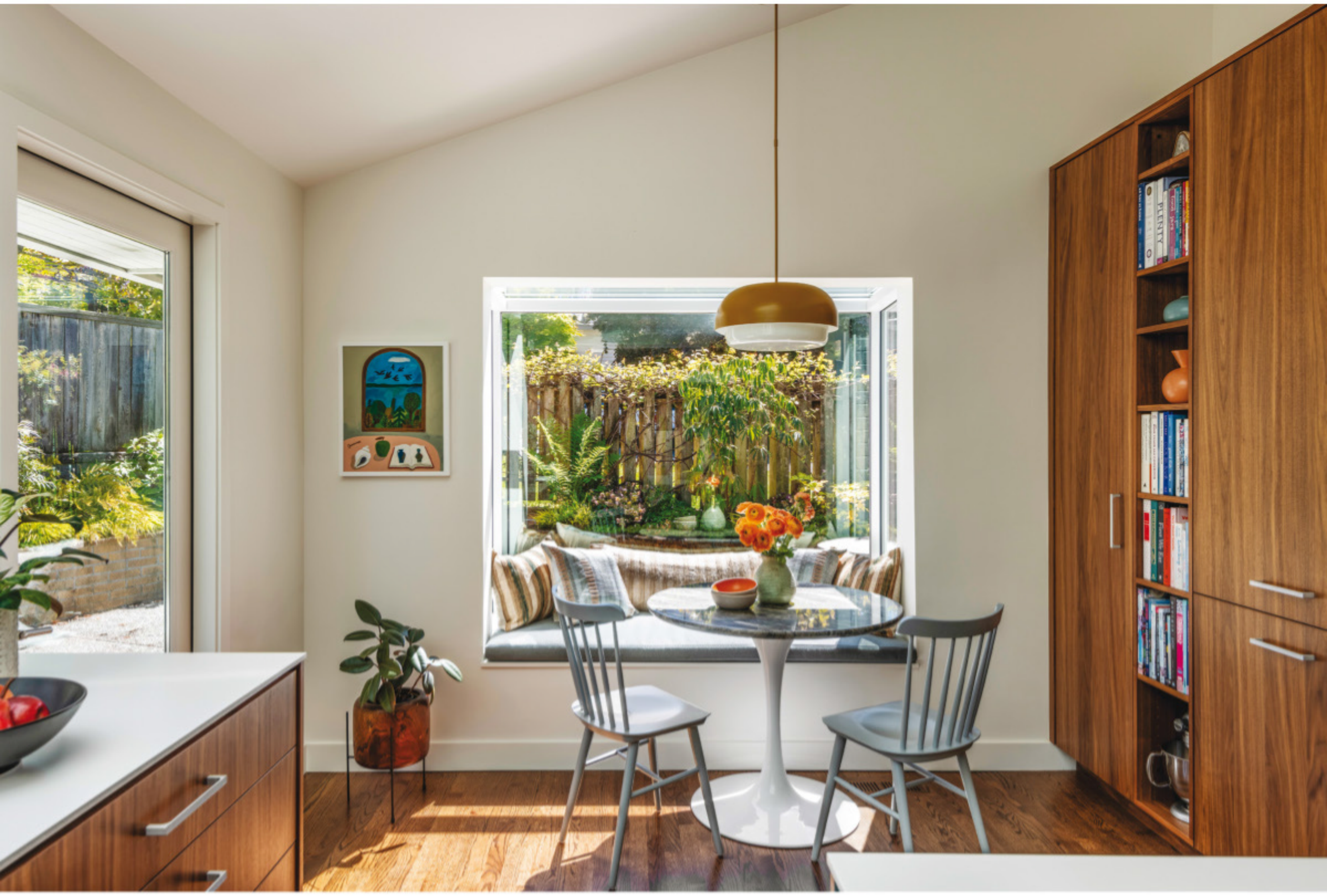


As the heart of the home, it's important that the kitchen is a personalized comfort to the residents—and this redesign is a tasteful blend. "A mix of new and old details along with few complementary design styles help spaces feel authentic to the inhabitants, even in kitchens," Kathleen says.

"Lori was drawn to Space Theory both for their smart design of cabinetry as well as the aesthetics; the design lines work well in mid-century upgrades. The black walnut finish adds an elevated look to the kitchen and feels cohesive with other walnut details in the home. We mixed in some moss-gray HPL laminate ('high-pressure' laminate that is resistant to scratches and wear) along with anodized aluminum (also great for resisting scratches and wear) to add contrast to the wood cabinetry. The redesign plan required all the existing cabinetry and appliances to be removed and replaced. We also patched in new flooring where needed and refinished the wood flooring. The kitchen now includes all new cabinetry and appliances, a custom island and a new window seat where an obsolete cabinet and small window had been. We removed the existing peninsula, which opened a pinched walk pattern (a pathway in and out of the home). We also relocated the washer and dryer, which had been housed in a wall closet. This allowed the countertop areas that flank the cooktop to widen, creating a more spacious cooking zone."

CREATING PERSONAL TOUCHPOINTS

"Although it's a high-task area of the home, the new kitchen has a cozy, happy vibe," she says. "The new window seat really drives that, but many other details—like the dishware display, floor-to-ceiling wood cabinetry wall, floating island and original artwork—all play an important role in layering in the comfort, personalization and charm."

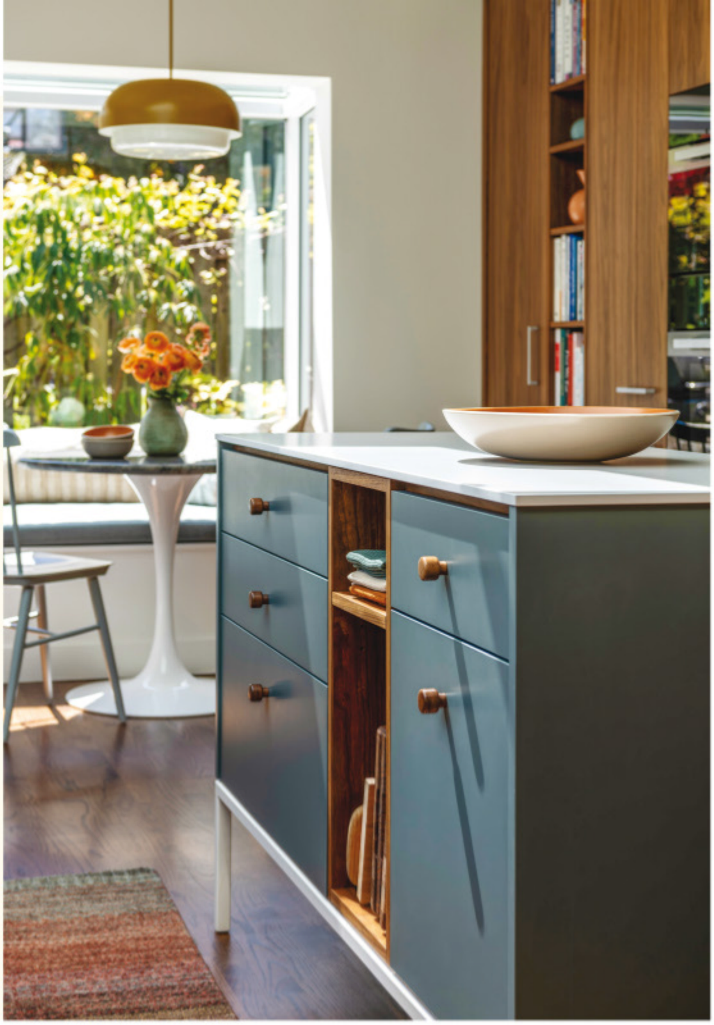
And, most importantly, her clients and their kids gave their new kitchen a five-star rating. "Lori's favorite detail about the new kitchen is their custom island. Collectively, the whole family really enjoys the ability to share meals and seated conversations in the kitchen. It ends up as a family gathering spot on weekends too."

SEE RESOURCES, PAGE 112

SEATING FOR EATING

Kathleen discusses the elements of a well-curated kitchen seating area.

The recipe for great MCM kitchen seating starts with high-quality seat cushions upholstered in fade-resistance fabrics because in sunny spots inexpensive foam will break down over time; lots of pillows (the more, the better—my inspo is always Jeannie’s bottle from the classic TV series “I Dream of Jeannie”); and table and seating scaled to fit the allowable space. The finishing touch is a light fixture centered on the composition (we chose Schoolhouse Electric Co.’s Ray model in the finish Dune for this kitchen).



Lori sourced Marvin’s SkyCove window, which allowed the team to create an eat-in kitchen without having to move any (existing) walls.” “We relocated the (existing) washer/dryer closet, freeing up space to help create an inviting spot for family dinners.”

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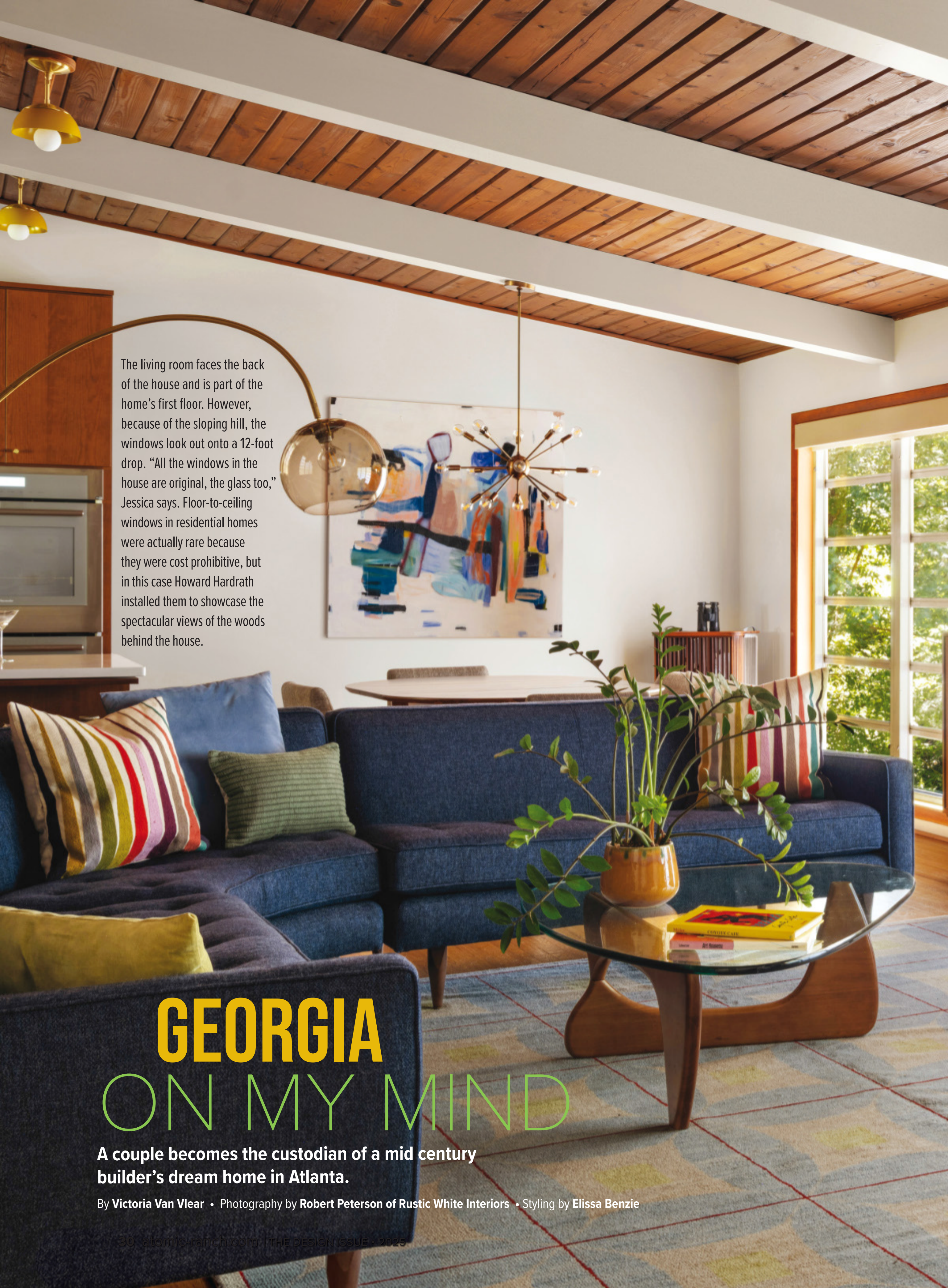


The living room faces the back of the house and is part of the home's first floor. However, because of the sloping hill, the windows look out onto a 12-foot drop. "All the windows in the house are original, the glass too," Jessica says. Floor-to-ceiling windows in residential homes were actually rare because they were cost prohibitive, but in this case Howard Hardrath installed them to showcase the spectacular views of the woods behind the house.

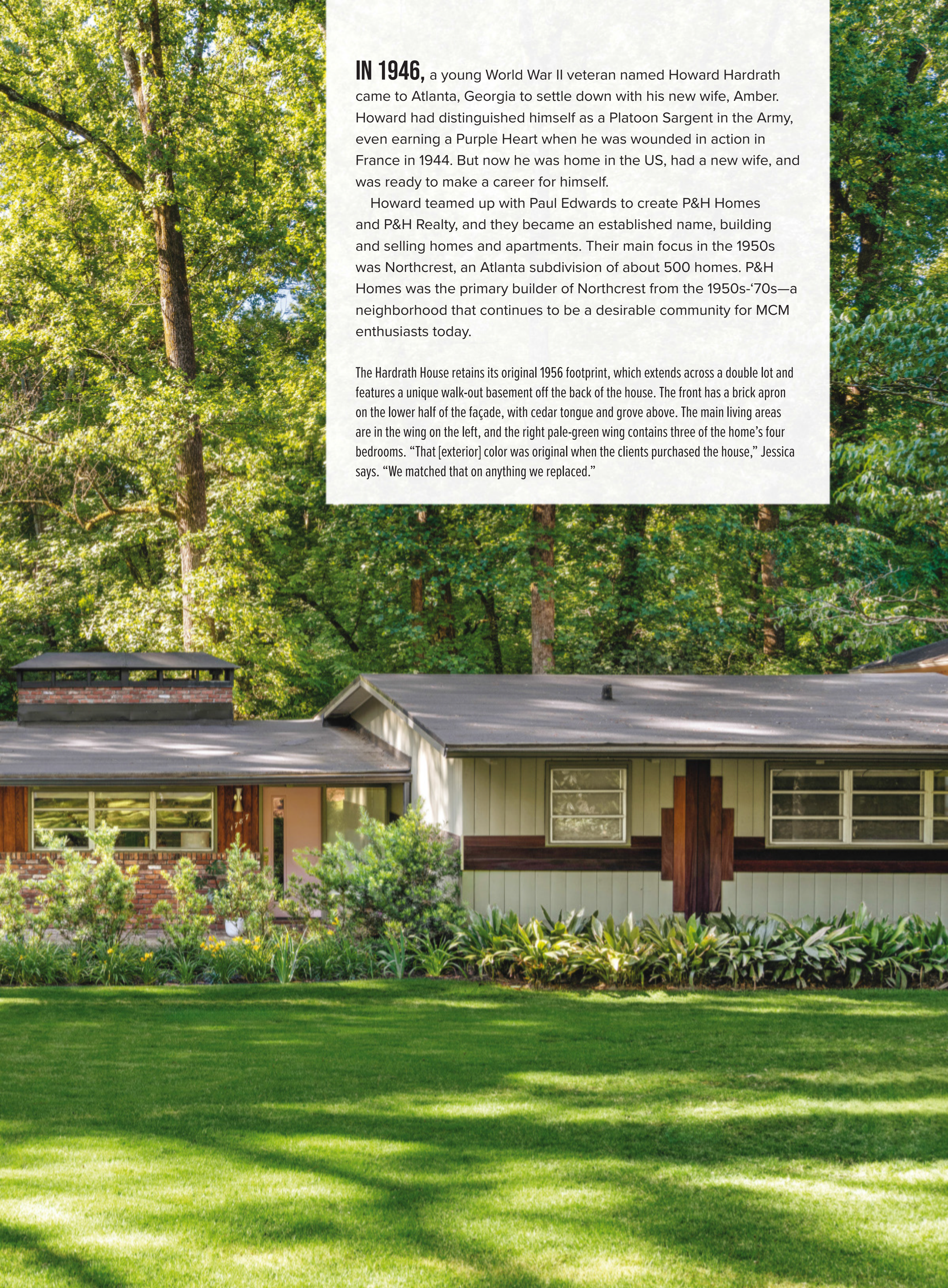
GEORGIA ON MY MIND

A couple becomes the custodian of a mid century builder's dream home in Atlanta.

By **Victoria Van Vlear** • Photography by **Robert Peterson of Rustic White Interiors** • Styling by **Elissa Benzie**

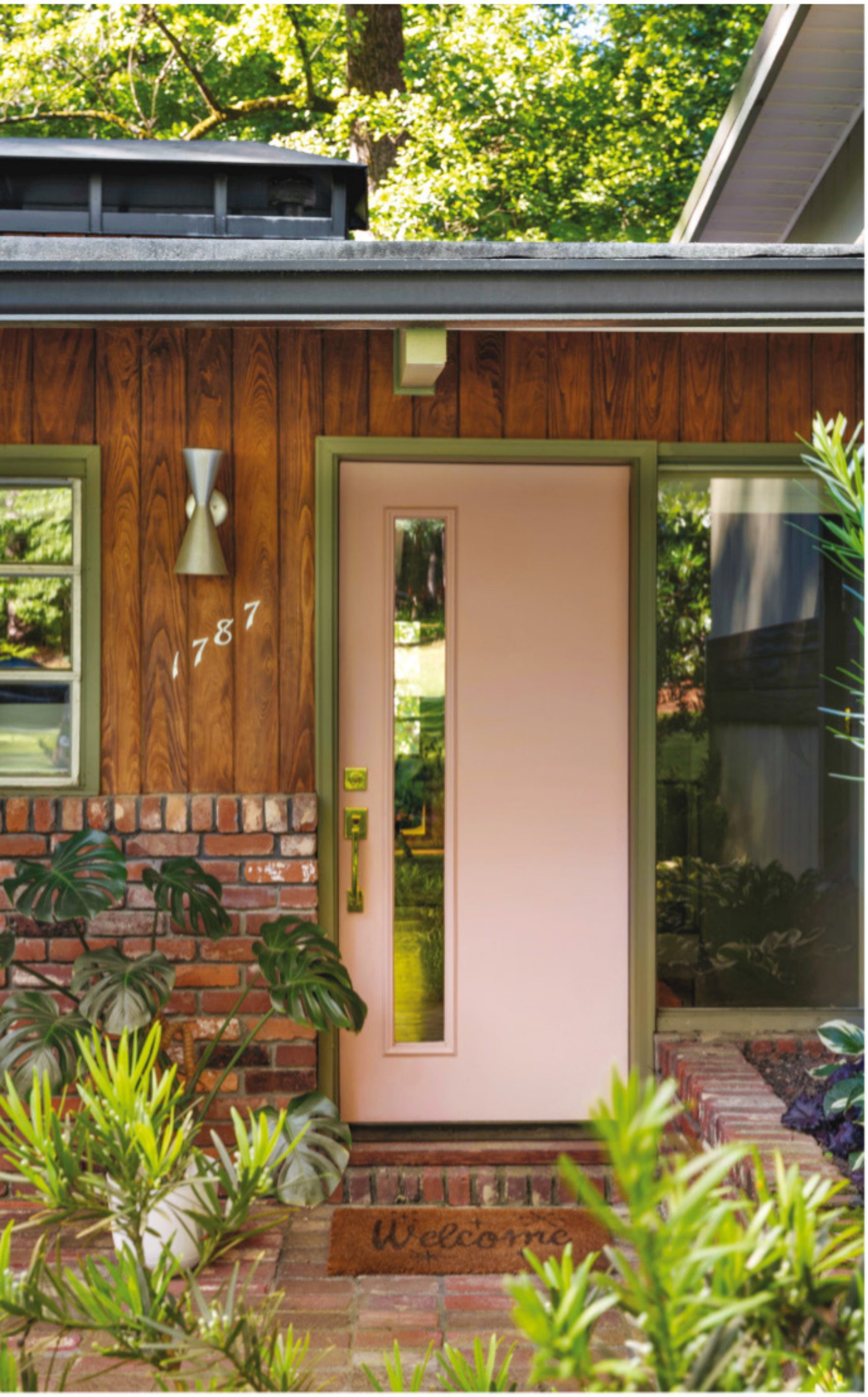
IN 1946, a young World War II veteran named Howard Hardrath came to Atlanta, Georgia to settle down with his new wife, Amber. Howard had distinguished himself as a Platoon Sargent in the Army, even earning a Purple Heart when he was wounded in action in France in 1944. But now he was home in the US, had a new wife, and was ready to make a career for himself.

Howard teamed up with Paul Edwards to create P&H Homes and P&H Realty, and they became an established name, building and selling homes and apartments. Their main focus in the 1950s was Northcrest, an Atlanta subdivision of about 500 homes. P&H Homes was the primary builder of Northcrest from the 1950s-‘70s—a neighborhood that continues to be a desirable community for MCM enthusiasts today.



The Hardrath House retains its original 1956 footprint, which extends across a double lot and features a unique walk-out basement off the back of the house. The front has a brick apron on the lower half of the façade, with cedar tongue and grove above. The main living areas are in the wing on the left, and the right pale-green wing contains three of the home’s four bedrooms. “That [exterior] color was original when the clients purchased the house,” Jessica says. “We matched that on anything we replaced.”

“**BECAUSE OF HOWARD’S HISTORY,** THE HOUSE HAS A LOT OF ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE, AND THEY LOVED THAT.”



But Howard didn’t build his dream home there. Instead, he built his family home in Sagamore Hills, another subdivision of Atlanta. While Sagamore Hills doesn’t have the same breadth of MCM homes as Northcrest, the “Hardrath House” has become the most famous residence in the neighborhood—an iconic example of mid century architecture in Atlanta.

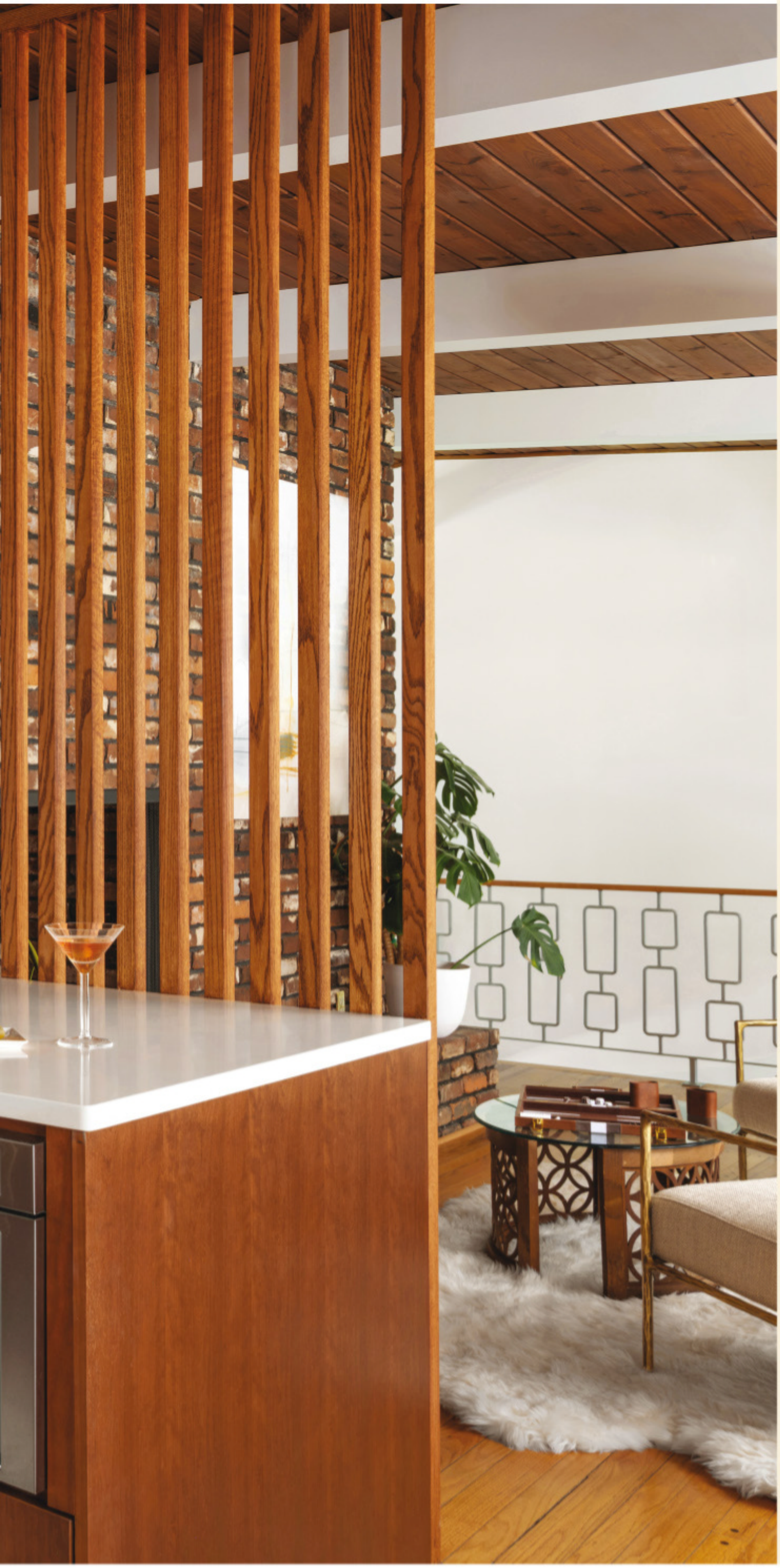
CHANGING HANDS

Howard Hardrath passed away at age 98, having lived in his dream house for nearly 60 years. When he died in 2015, the home finally changed hands. It was sold again in 2022, when the current owners bought it. “They weren’t really MCM enthusiasts before they bought the house,” says Jessica Peckham Flake, senior architect and lead designer at Copper Sky Design + Remodel. “But they spent a lot of time researching mid century design and going to local antiques shops after they bought it. They fell in love with it even more.”

The house is unique—even compared to other MCM houses in Sagmore Hills and Northcrest—because of its positioning. “It’s on a double lot, a beautiful wooded area with a creek in the back,” Jessica says. “The slope is extreme enough that they were able to build a walk-out basement. It’s not popular to have basements in this region, because we don’t deal with freeze and thaw as much.” But Howard built the house to enjoy the scenery of the wooded area, creating a unique structure in the process.

above: The front door is new to the home. “The original front door was fiberglass, which they had put in to match the screen door leading out onto the breezeway,” Jessica says. “It was opaque, and the client wanted a visual sight line out the front door.” The new door has a tall vertical window with a clear view to the woods behind the house.

opposite: The den and fireplace are central to the home’s living areas. “That brick is original, all we did is clean it,” Jessica says. The oak slat wall between the den and kitchen is new, inspired by the home’s original blueprints, which called for it between the entryway and den. “It’s a visual screen that provides a visual line of sight, but also provides definition between the spaces,” Jessica says.



THE POST AND BEAM CHALLENGE

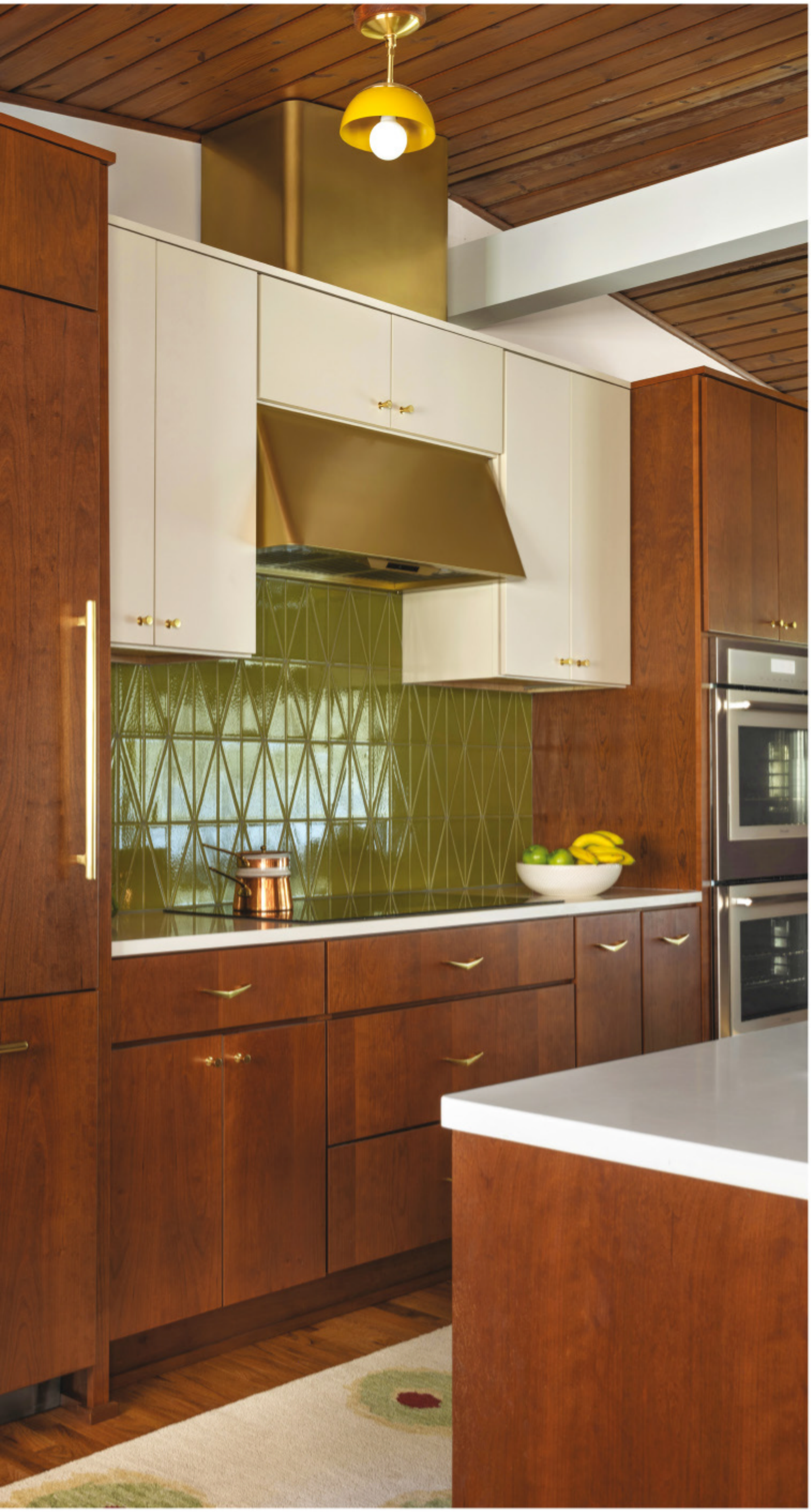
Many MCM homes have post and beam construction. However, it leads to unique renovation challenges.

Post and beam construction uses vertical posts that intersect with horizontal beams to create the structure of the house. This design means fewer load-bearing interior walls, lending itself to the classic open floorplan. It also means the beams can remain exposed alongside wood paneling for the ceiling. “It’s unique to MCM post and beam houses,” Jessica says. “That wood on the ceiling is the structural decking for the roof system.”

The downside is that there’s minimal space between the ceiling and roof. “That becomes a really interesting construction challenge when renovating these homes, because there’s no ceiling cavity,” Jessica says. “It becomes difficult to hide new electrical.”

The solution in the Hardrath House came through the exposed beams. They were white when the new homeowners bought them, giving the team a functional opportunity. “We boxed them out to be slightly bigger than they were originally, because we used that area to hide the new electrical,” Jessica says. Not only were they able to hide the electrical, but they didn’t have to remove any of the original wood paneling. “We didn’t have to deal with matching existing stains, which is hard to do,” Jessica says.

The original kitchen stopped at the edge of the fireplace, with upper cabinets that impeded the line of sight to the woods behind the house. The team opened up the space, with a new addition of a slat wall. “The original blueprints call out a 2x4 slat wall between the entry hall and den,” Jessica says. “We essentially took inspiration from that and recreated it between the kitchen and den instead. We’re not sure if it was never originally built or if it was removed in the previous renovation.”



PRESERVATION AND RENOVATION

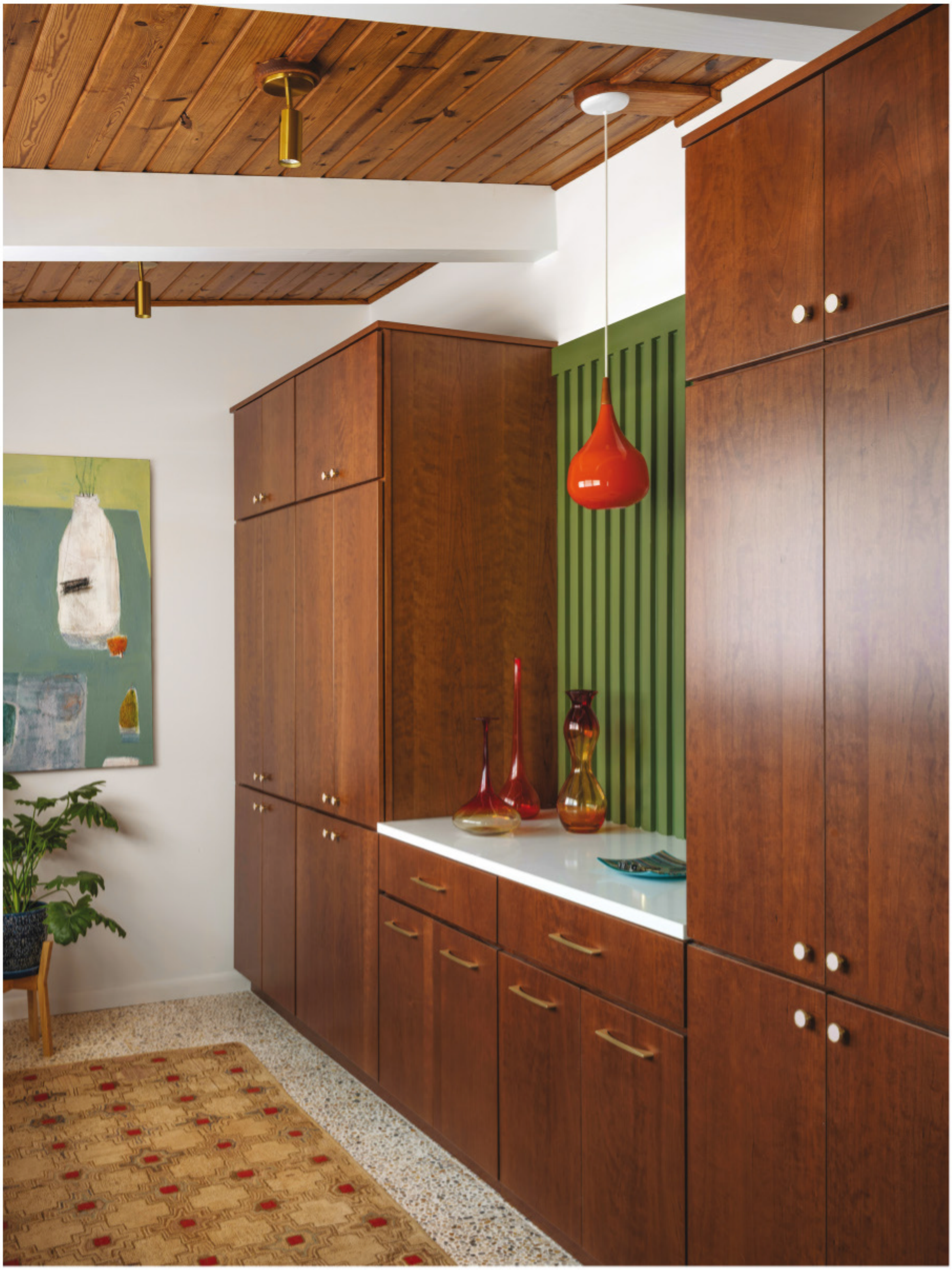
The couple called on Copper Sky to help them fit the house to their needs. "We specialize in historic home renovations in the Atlanta area," Jessica says. "We had done another MCM project a couple years ago that the client saw, and they reached out to us a week before they closed on the house in June 2022."

By the time they started the design process with Copper Sky in December, they had done a lot of research. "Because of Howard's history, the house has a lot of architectural significance, and they loved that," Jessica says. "They really leaned into it. They wanted a design that respected the architectural integrity, preserving it as well as updating it for their needs."

The team didn't do many structural changes, keeping the home's original footprint. Instead, most of the changes were to the room layouts and interior design to make the house more functional. "They wanted a layout more conducive to entertaining, with more storage space," Jessica says.

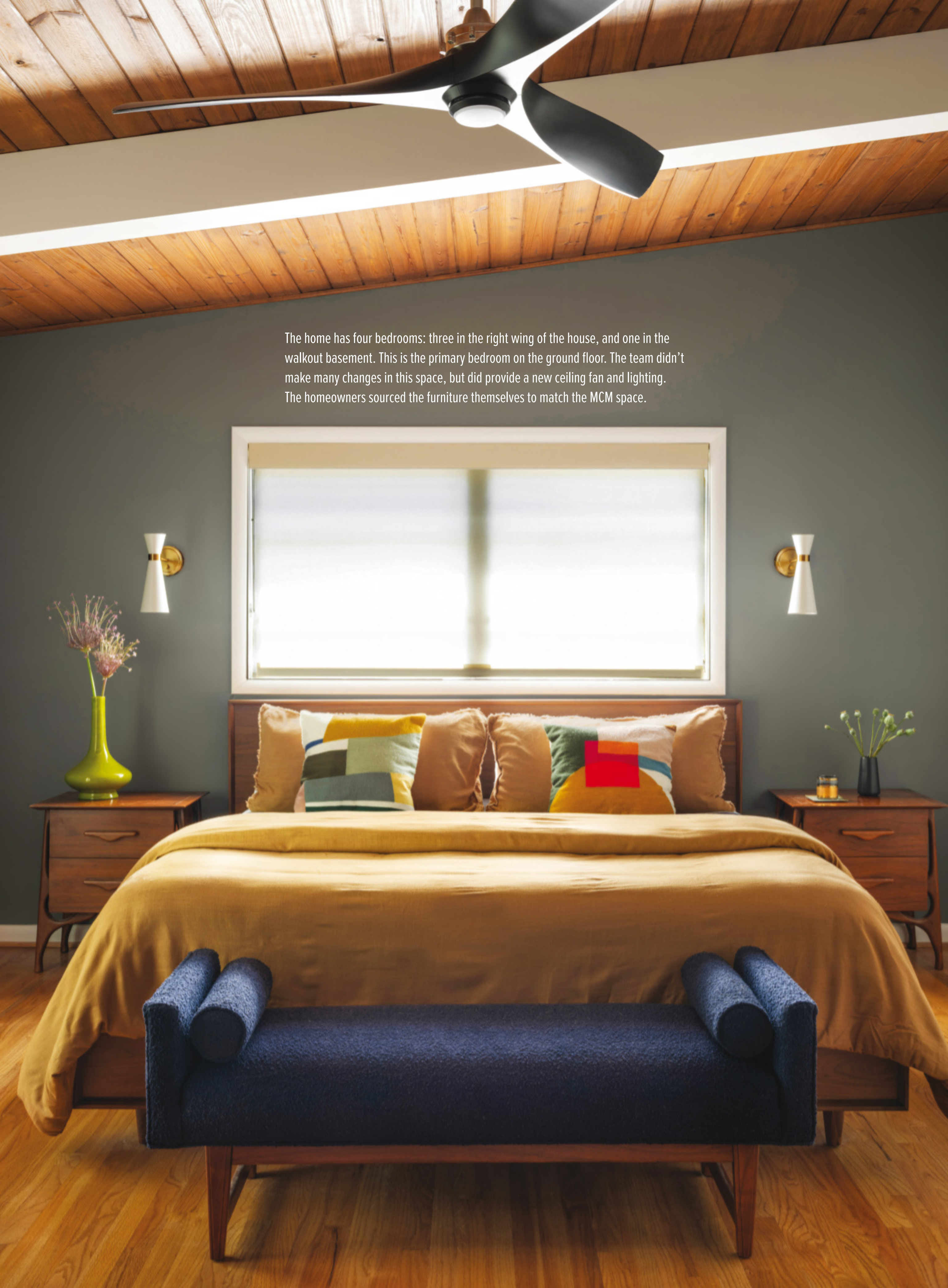
left: One of the kitchen highlights is the custom vent hood, which came with its own construction challenges. "The clients really wanted a gold brass vent hood," Jessica says. "The vent duct has to go through the wall or ceiling. The wall wasn't thick enough, and we were [restricted] from using the surround that came with the hood because the ceiling wasn't flat." The solution was two-fold: First, Jessica commissioned a custom vent surround (above the white cabinets) to fit the sloped ceiling. Second, she designed a small set of white cabinets to break up the two pieces and hide the exhaust connection. "The cabinet was a way to separate the two pieces," she says.

oppposite: The custom cabinets in the kitchen are honey sage cherry, and include a paneled refrigerator and dishwasher. The ceilings are original, with cedar wood paneling and exposed beams that make up the post and beam construction.

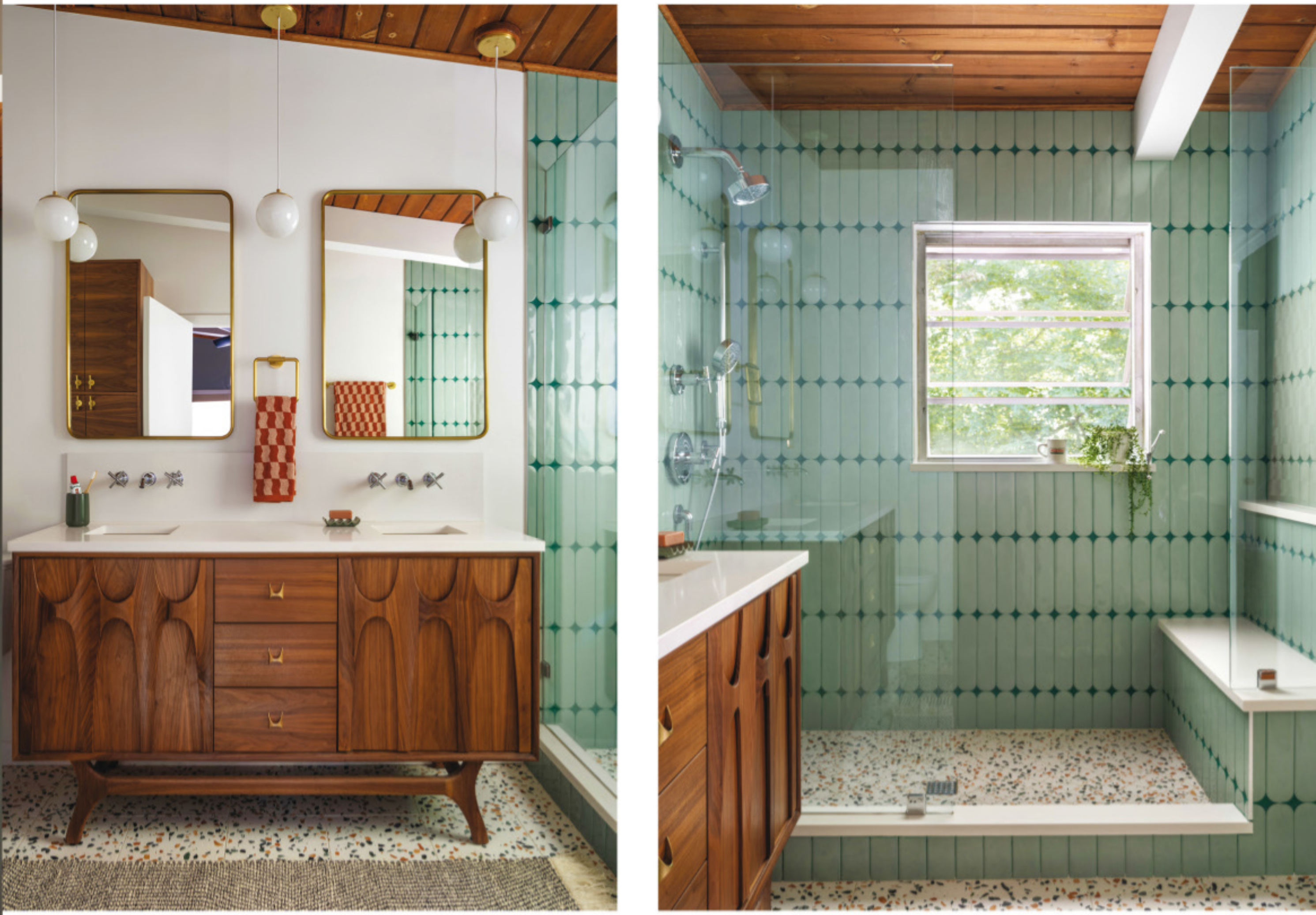


The new mudroom adds much-needed storage. "It was previously a single car garage and breezeway that separated the garage from the kitchen," Jessica says. "We enclosed part of the breezeway and garage into a mudroom." The custom cabinets match those in the kitchen, but with different brass hardware for variety. "The fun knobs have a light pink leather in the center, the same exterior pink as the front door," Jessica says.

For example, the team extended the kitchen into the original dining room. "The original kitchen was quite small, and not functional for more than one person," Jessica says. "The cabinets cut off the kitchen from the dining room and the windows overlooking the woods." Instead, Jessica and her team extended the kitchen to open it up. "I'm really proud of the kitchen layout," she says. "Extending it past the fireplace created a much more pleasant flow for everyday living."



The home has four bedrooms: three in the right wing of the house, and one in the walkout basement. This is the primary bedroom on the ground floor. The team didn't make many changes in this space, but did provide a new ceiling fan and lighting. The homeowners sourced the furniture themselves to match the MCM space.



above, left: The primary bathroom has a redesigned layout that maximizes the existing footprint. The original layout had the toilet in the current shower location, with a combination tub/shower where the vanity now sits. There was a wall in place of the current toilet, which separated a single-sink vanity and closet. The team removed the closet and restructured the space to make room for a larger shower and double vanity.
above, right: The new shower design is a highlight not only of the primary bathroom, but the whole home. “Aesthetically, the shower tile is one of the most unique elements, a testament to the attention to detail the design team and clients brought to the project,” Jessica says. “The tile was selected for the diamond grout detail, which is reminiscent of the starburst shape so central to mid century modern style.

The other major change was to enclose part of the original breezeway and single-car garage to create a mudroom. “They wanted [the extra storage] without taking away from any of the architectural significance of the house,” Jessica says. The breezeway originally separated the garage from the kitchen. Jessica and her team took out the screen door leading outside and enclosed part of the exterior spaces. Now the couple is able to store their entertaining pieces, and even pantry essentials, in the mudroom.

Another design highlight is the primary bathroom. Like many original MCM bathrooms, it was small, with a single vanity and a wall that separated the toilet from the rest of the bathroom. The team removed the wall, added a double vanity and expanded the shower. They were able to do this by eliminating an original linen closet. “The overall footprint remains the same,” Jessica says.

As for furnishings and décor, the homeowners did a lot of research and shopping, and sourced most of it themselves. Jessica and her team helped determine colors for built-in elements such as the terrazzo floor tiles, and tile in the kitchen backsplash and bathroom shower. “Honestly, we used Atomic Ranch for research,” Jessica says. “There are a lot of articles and blog posts we used to reference colors. Current trends were not a consideration—all our decisions were made from research of the time period.”

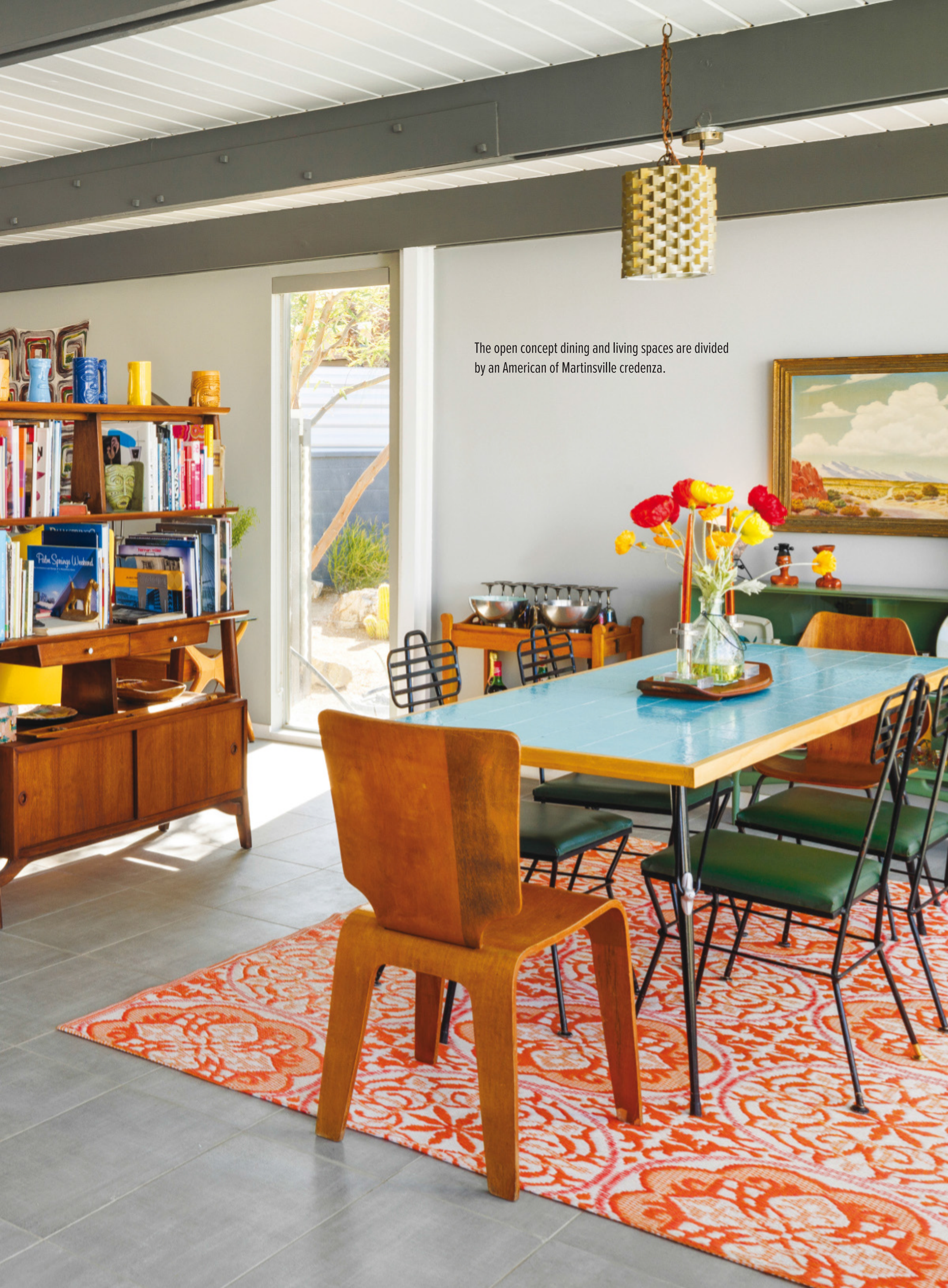
SEE RESOURCES, PAGE 112

Painting the Desert
atomic ranch

TREASURE HUNTERS

A couple renovates and redesigns their Palm Springs ‘getaway lair.’

By **Meryl Schoenbaum** • Photography by **Oscar Flink**


The open concept dining and living spaces are divided by an American of Martinsville credenza.

Palm Springs Weekend

The same era as the structure, this 1957 Plymouth Fury was loaned by Chris Menrad.

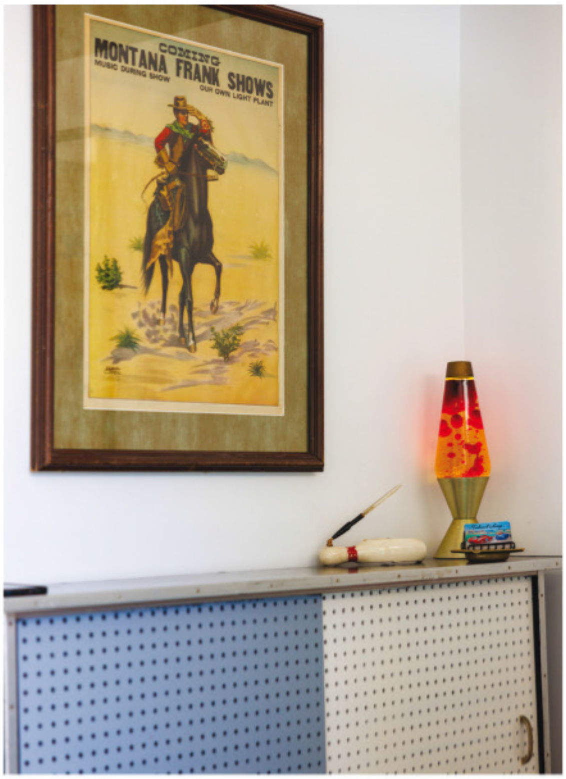
ASK ANY Mid Century Modern enthusiast where they would like to vacation to be immersed in their favorite design style and the answer would most likely be Palm Springs. Mark and Lois Mitchell are no exception and they decided to make their vacation home in the mecca for MCM style.

"We use this Palm Springs location as our getaway lair," Lois explains. "Our dog, Wexler the Welsh terrier, always accompanies us." When the couple came upon this 1957 gem they knew its setting and architectural details were impeccable, but they also knew it needed major reconstruction. "We contacted Eric Bennett who with his wife Lindsey Schneider hosted a show produced by Glass Entertainment Group for broadcast on HGTV. We struck a deal with Eric to provide renovation sources and guidance, along with designer Kellee Jones," Lois says.

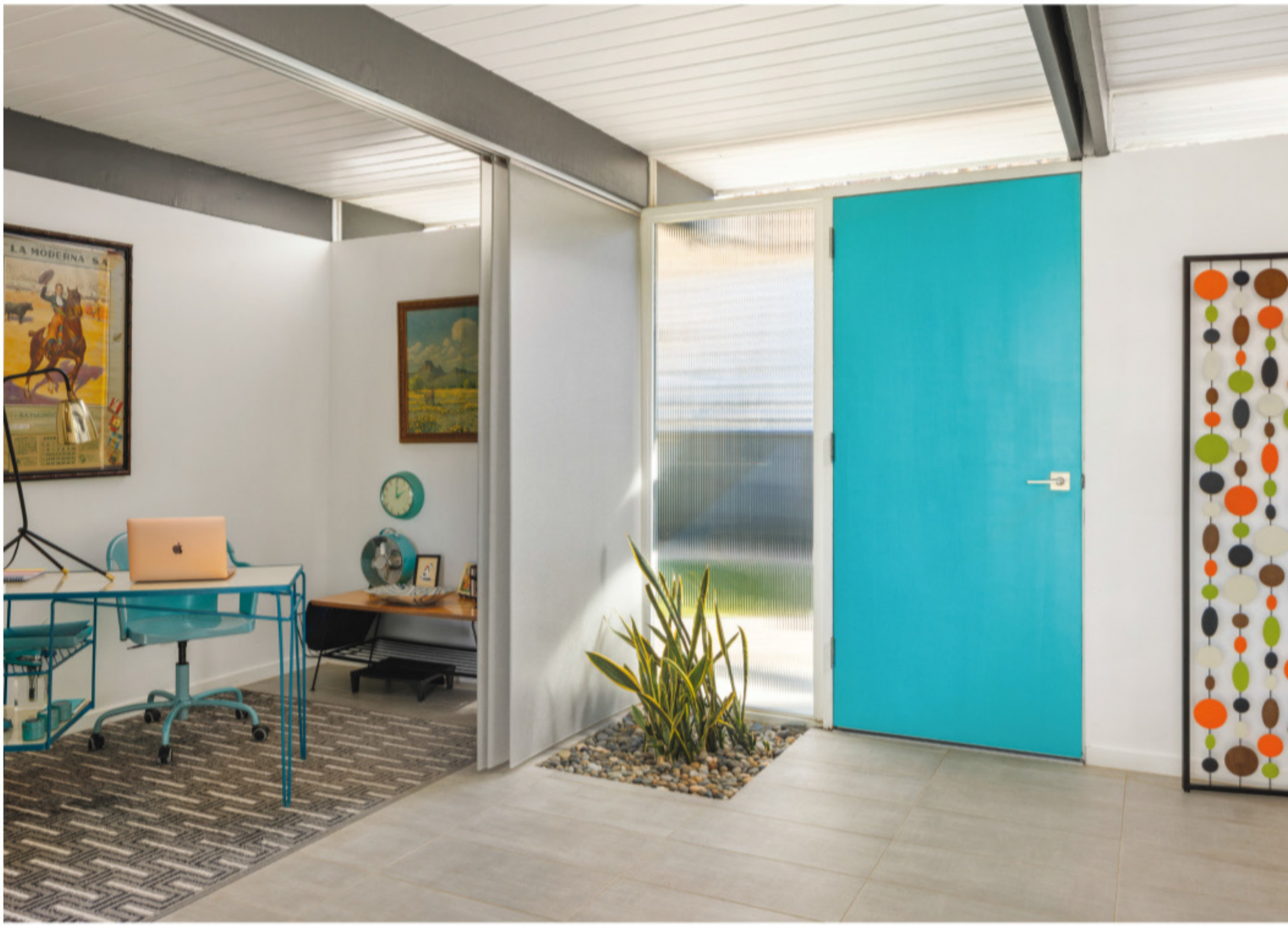
The couple had a clear vision of the Mid Century Modern elements they wanted to include in their vacation home. “Our style always has a sense of eccentricity and fun. We are passionate for authentic vintage design and functionality. Mark is more of a mid-century purist, while I follow aesthetic appeal across eras,” Lois explains. “If furniture or décor provide quirky humor and look good in the mix, we go for it.”

PALM SPRINGS PARADISE

The home’s location offers breathtaking views. “The house looks out to surrounding mountains in all directions. In the distance, we can see across Palm Springs past the giant windmills all the way to the snowcapped San Gorgonio Mountain,” says Mark, who is semi-retired from his classic cars import-export business. “The house is in the widely varied Araby Cove neighborhood of Palm Springs where the houses all differ: everything from genuine adobe, to handcrafted local stone (R. Lee Miller’s “Munchkinville”), to 1920’s Craftsman, to Mid Century Modern, to 1970’s A-Frame, to Spanish and Mediterranean are all found in this fun neighborhood.



below: The indoor planter in the entry is original. The office was once a small bathroom, but the MItchell’s converted it into a small home office.



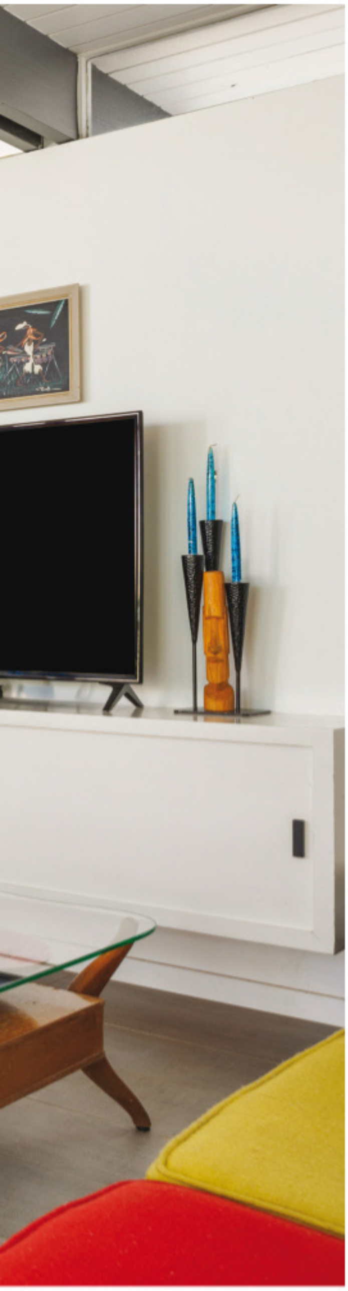
opposite: Some of the decorative objects featured throughout the house. “Every ‘treasure’ reminds us of a trip, experience or the excitement from finding it. We both also love vintage clothes and accessories and learning about their historical origins,” Lois says.
this page: The original floating fireplace is set off by a rescued floating wall cabinet.

There are also new houses being built in the truly modern style Palm Springs is known for. There are no two alike, but they somehow fit together into a cohesive and distinctive neighborhood. As typical for the mid-mod era, the house is one level and built on a concrete slab. There are two bedrooms of similar size and two full bathrooms.”

While the home’s original architect is a bit of a mystery, the outstanding quality of its design is not. “We have not been able to track down the original architect, but on city records the builder appears to be Mr. Fix-It,” Mark says. “The style is classic mid-century post and beam. The style most closely emulates the mid-century architect Donald Wexler (our dog’s namesake). After viewing photographs, Donald Wexler’s heirs agree with the possibility that his Palm Springs firm may have been involved.”

MID-MOD MODIFICATIONS

The renovation and redesign list was specific and extensive. “The repairs included stripping the house to the studs, adding all new plumbing, electrical, insulation, drywall and tile floor throughout,” Mark says. “A pool was added, plus hardscape, major landscaping and period correct corrugated fiberglass perimeter fencing. “The first efforts were to



AUTOPIA
TOMORROWLAND

strip away add-ons and poorly done ‘improvements’ from over the years to get to the bones of the structure,” Mark explains. ““This included removing a drywall ceiling, which revealed the original tongue-and-groove and wood beams that were in excellent condition. The old tile floors were also removed and we were very surprised to find the original indoor floor planters that had been filled in”.

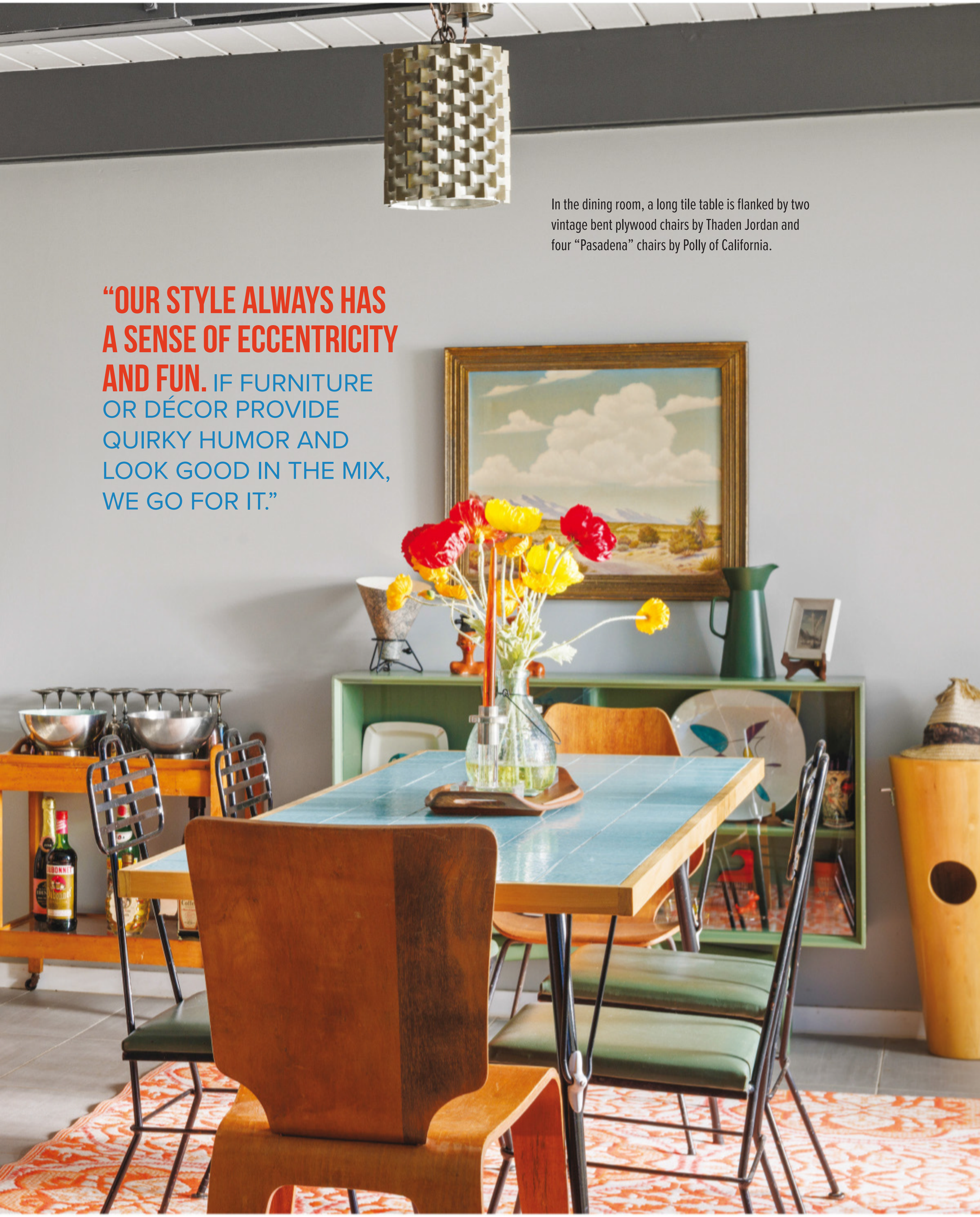
Lois, who is retired from her career in philanthropy and marketing, adds, “Knowing the house would serve a vacation vibe, we maximized using the private outdoor areas. We also indulged our love of gardening by accentuating special desert plants and cacti. Most important of all was to bring the house back to its mid-century roots, combining indoor and outdoor living. Once stripped down, the house had many authentic MCM elements that we wanted to emphasize. Classic characteristics included the tongue-and-groove ceiling, indoor planters, clerestory windows and an original floating fireplace with a rectangular steel hood and highly unusual exposed concrete aggregate hearth.”

The home’s interior and exterior spaces have been updated with a new color palette. “The exterior color of the house was an odd orange—that definitely needed changing,” Lois says. “The interior paint and flooring chosen were neutral paint colors because we wanted to bring in strong pops of turquoise, orange and yellow with décor.”

REIMAGINED ROOMS

The home's entryway sets the tone for the enhancements made throughout the house that blur the lines between interior and exterior. "The front door and reeded glass sidelight remained in the same location, though both materials and hardware were exchanged," Mark explains. Lois points out the classic Mid Century Modern concept found in the space. "The view upon entering the space is stunning, drawing the eye to distant mountains and sky."

The kitchen was redesigned for improved form and function. New cabinets with stainless steel fronts were crafted, while some elements of the original 1957 kitchen were repurposed. The vintage "wideline" plywood hanging upper cabinet was installed, and the matching panel was reused on the front panel of the new island. The redesign including creating a new bathroom attached to the primary bedroom, which pushed the footprint of the kitchen out. It was also and turned 90 degrees to better focus on the great room and pool areas.



In the dining room, a long tile table is flanked by two vintage bent plywood chairs by Thaden Jordan and four "Pasadena" chairs by Polly of California.

"OUR STYLE ALWAYS HAS A SENSE OF ECCENTRICITY AND FUN. IF FURNITURE OR DÉCOR PROVIDE QUIRKY HUMOR AND LOOK GOOD IN THE MIX, WE GO FOR IT."

left: A painting of a local desert scene hangs over ceramic pieces in the dining room.

below: Newly created stainless steel cabinets and wide-lined plywood on the hanging cabinet and front panel on the island were repurposed from the original kitchen.

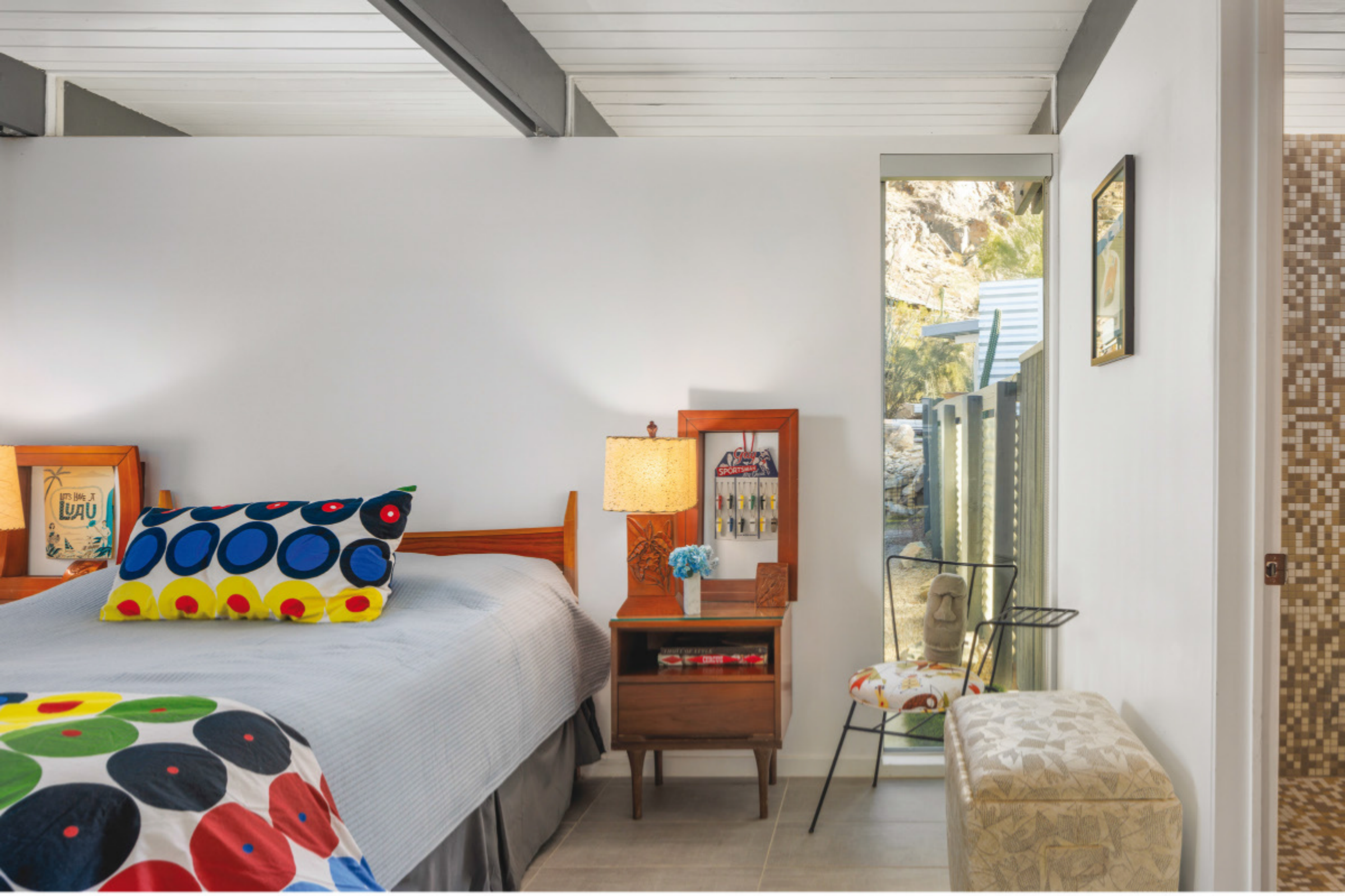
A large island was built using some of the materials saved from the original kitchen and both ends were built from stacked concrete blocks to match the original fireplace." Lois adds, "We sourced narrow appliances to maximize the meal-prep area."

The couple's redesign goal of blurring the lines between indoors and out in classic MCM style is evident in the primary bedroom and bath. "Initially, there was no differentiation between the bedrooms—they are the same dimensions. We decided to dedicate the bedroom with expansive views as the primary," Lois explains. Mark adds, "A new master ensuite bathroom was created that also has the same expansive view. Kohler fixtures and a 'zero threshold' shower were used along with period-correct mosaic tiles by American Olean."

Accessibility to the outdoors was a primary consideration for the dining room. “Large floor-to-ceiling windows were replaced with dual-glazed and a pair of custom-made sliding doors to allow easy access from the kitchen or living room to the pool and yard,” Mark says.

The exterior spaces received as much careful design consideration as the interiors. “The street side of the house has decomposed granite and native desert plants that attract hummingbirds and other wildlife,” Mark states. “A privacy fence was built to screen the inner courtyard. Along the fenced wall and side of the house are barrel cacti and agave plus a large Peruvian Monstrose and Totem Pole cactus. Along the side of the house there was a huge, mounted swamp cooler.

LA MODERNA S.A.



above: The guest room features vintage Marimekko bedding in bold colors. "I once found a mid-century house that was owned by an architect who had been part of the 'Case Study' program from Arts & Architecture," mark recalls. "It was full of furniture from that era and the family sold us all of it: Eames, Knoll, George Nelson and multiple Scandinavian designers. On our perpetual treasure hunts, we often update and replace furniture and artwork with even better finds!"

Once the cooler was removed and the wall opened up, another amazing view was revealed! A floor-to-ceiling window was created and a desert garden was planted. The backyard used to have an uneven concrete patio with a large wooden shade structure. These were replaced with a trapezoid 'spool' (combination spa-pool), green turf and pebbles accenting concrete squares while incorporating an existing cinder-block wall to camouflage the pool equipment."

STYLING THE SPACES

After the major modifications were made, Lois and Mark introduced their MCM collections. "Our various accumulations of ceramics, figurines, artwork, travel memorabilia, glassware, furniture, etc., often have functional value, therefore we use authentic serving ware, linens, vases, clocks, lamps and so on whenever possible," Lois says.

"One of our favorite activities is treasure hunting," Lois reveals. "This takes the form of pursuing yard sales, swap meets, thrift stores and estate sales.

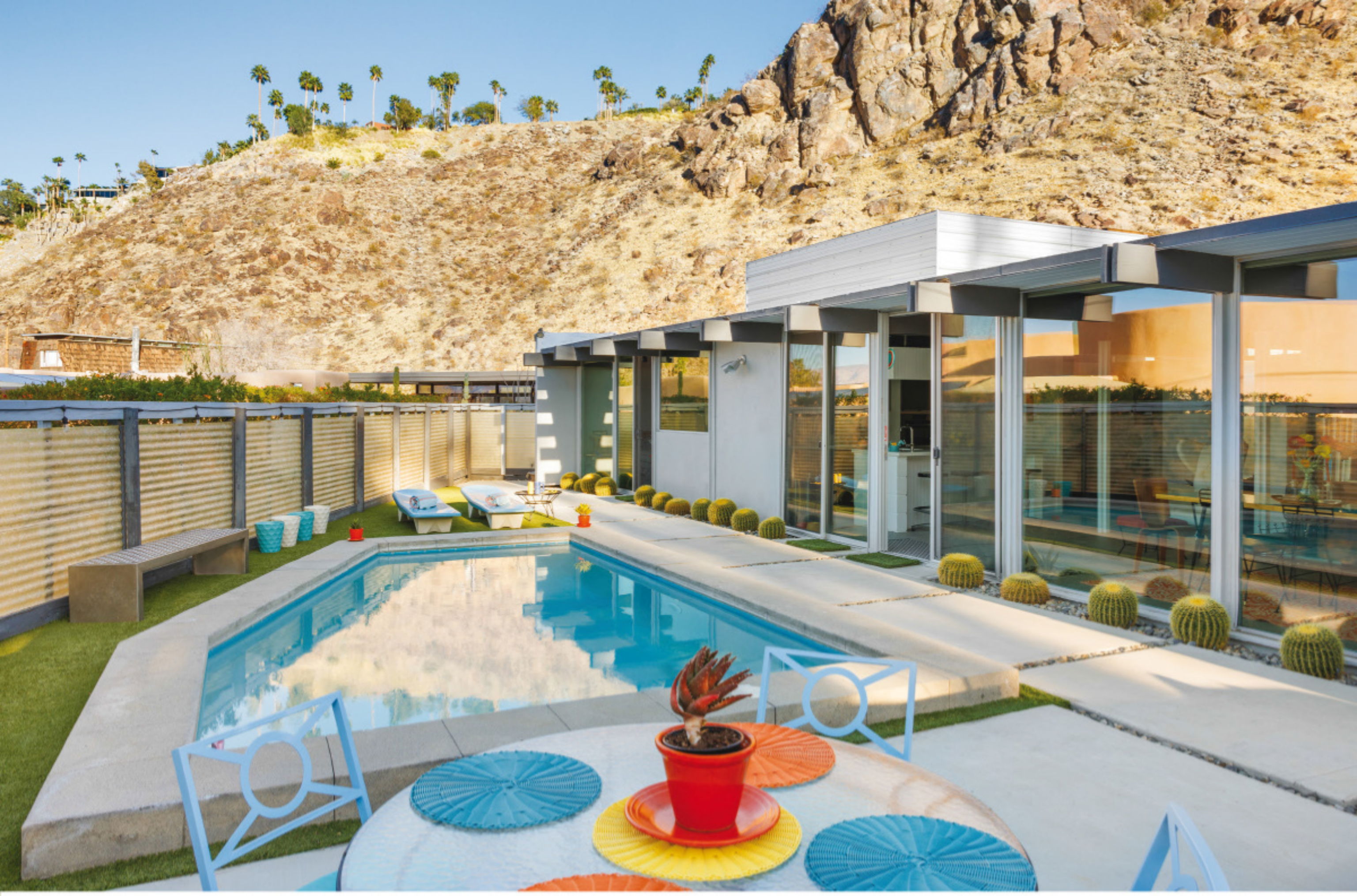
“WHENEVER WE ARRIVE, WE IMMEDIATELY RELAX FROM THE SURROUNDING NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND VIEWS.”

top, left: The guest bath features mosaic tiles by American Olean.

top, right: The primary bath has a mirror above the sink that reflects the shower tiles and window view.

above: A sliding door with access to the pool was added to the primary bedroom.

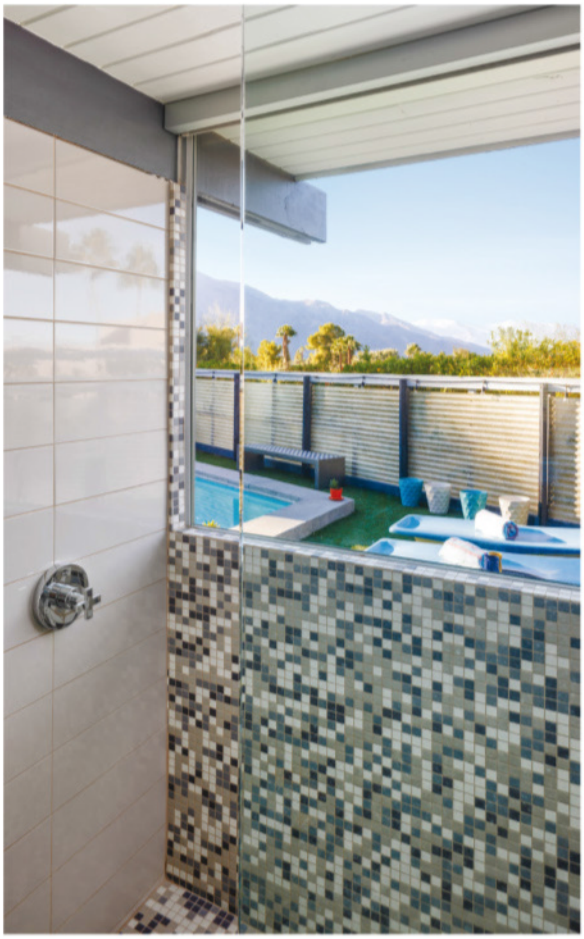
“MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL WAS TO BRING THE HOUSE **BACK TO ITS MID-CENTURY ROOTS,** COMBINING INDOOR AND OUTDOOR LIVING.”



opposite: A pair of vintage Fibrella fiberglass loungers flank the pool as the homeowners' dog Wexler relaxes by the firepit.

above: A poolside view of Southridge Mountain.

below, right: The primary shower with a view of the mountain has the same tile as in the other bathroom but in a different colorway.



Every 'treasure' reminds us of a trip, experience or the excitement from finding it. We both have collected pieces since our early twenties, so we had plenty on hand. Mark actually supported himself through college by selling clothing and furniture finds to vendors on Melrose Avenue in L.A. Lois craves creating settings with unique pieces that relate to each other through themes, colors, shapes or materials. We both also love vintage clothes and accessories and learning about their historical origins."

Lois reveals the couple's favorite aspects of their dream retreat. "We like how modest and streamlined the dwelling is. It provides the perfect setting for dramatic decorative embellishments," she says. "Whenever we arrive, we immediately relax from the surrounding natural environment and views."

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IN THE SPOTLIGHT: ARABY COVE

With its spectacular views, this location has attracted filmmakers, celebrities and artists.

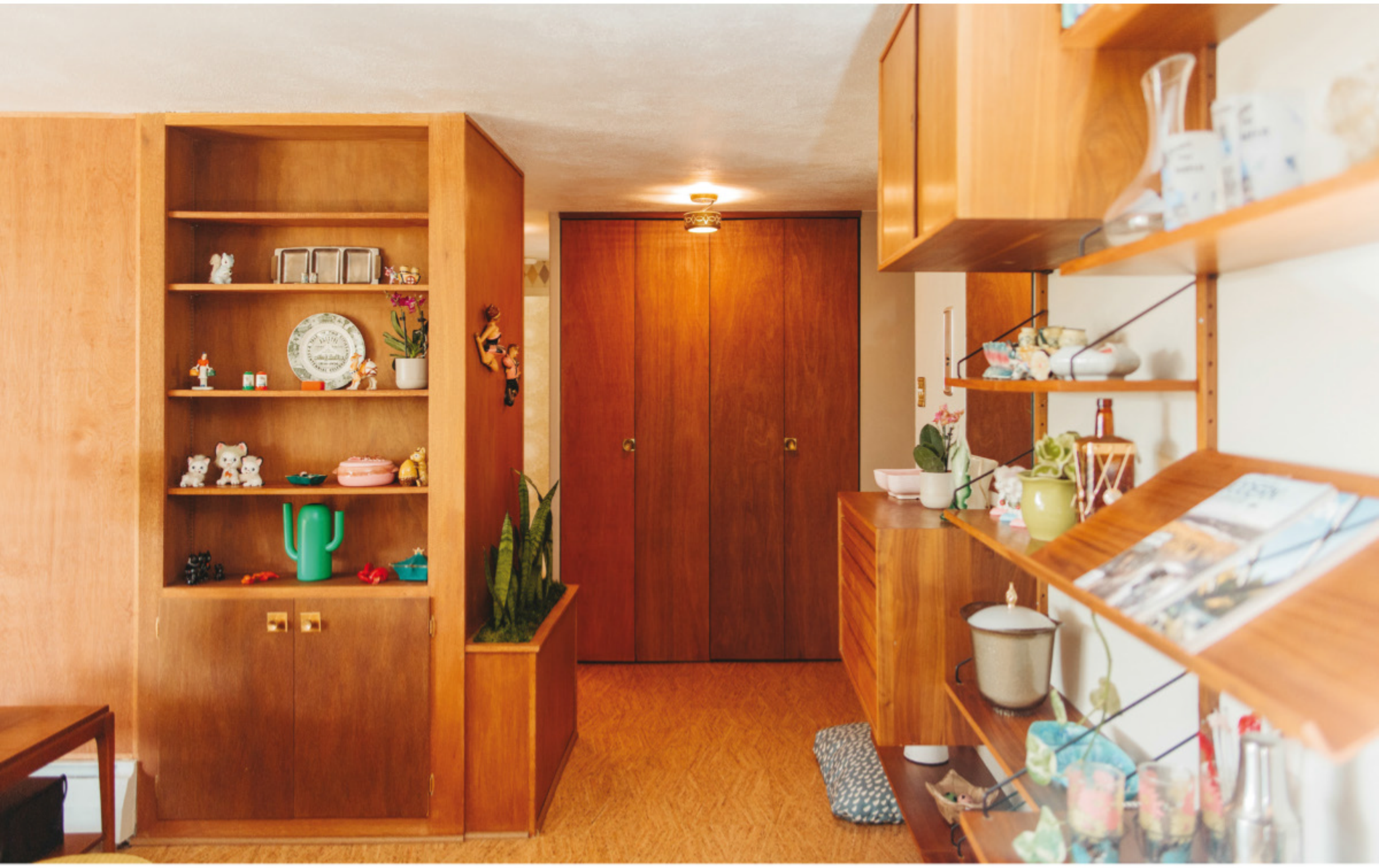
“During the 1970s, the area became known as an artists’ colony and we still had elderly artist neighbors a decade ago,” Lois says.

“The setting is one of the property’s greatest features. It is located below the Southridge community, including Steve McQueen’s house and the infamous Bob Hope Estate, which is perched on cliffs above us,” Mark explains. “From our backyard we can even view the celebrated Elrod house used in the classic James Bond film ‘Diamonds are Forever’ (where Bambi and Thumper had their fight scene with Mr. Bond). One of Howard Hughes’ houses is a few doors away from us.”

A PRECIOUS GEM

One condo owner's story of unearthing and polishing a 1964 MCM condo until it shines.

By **Jolene Nolte** • Photography by **Stephanie Parsley**



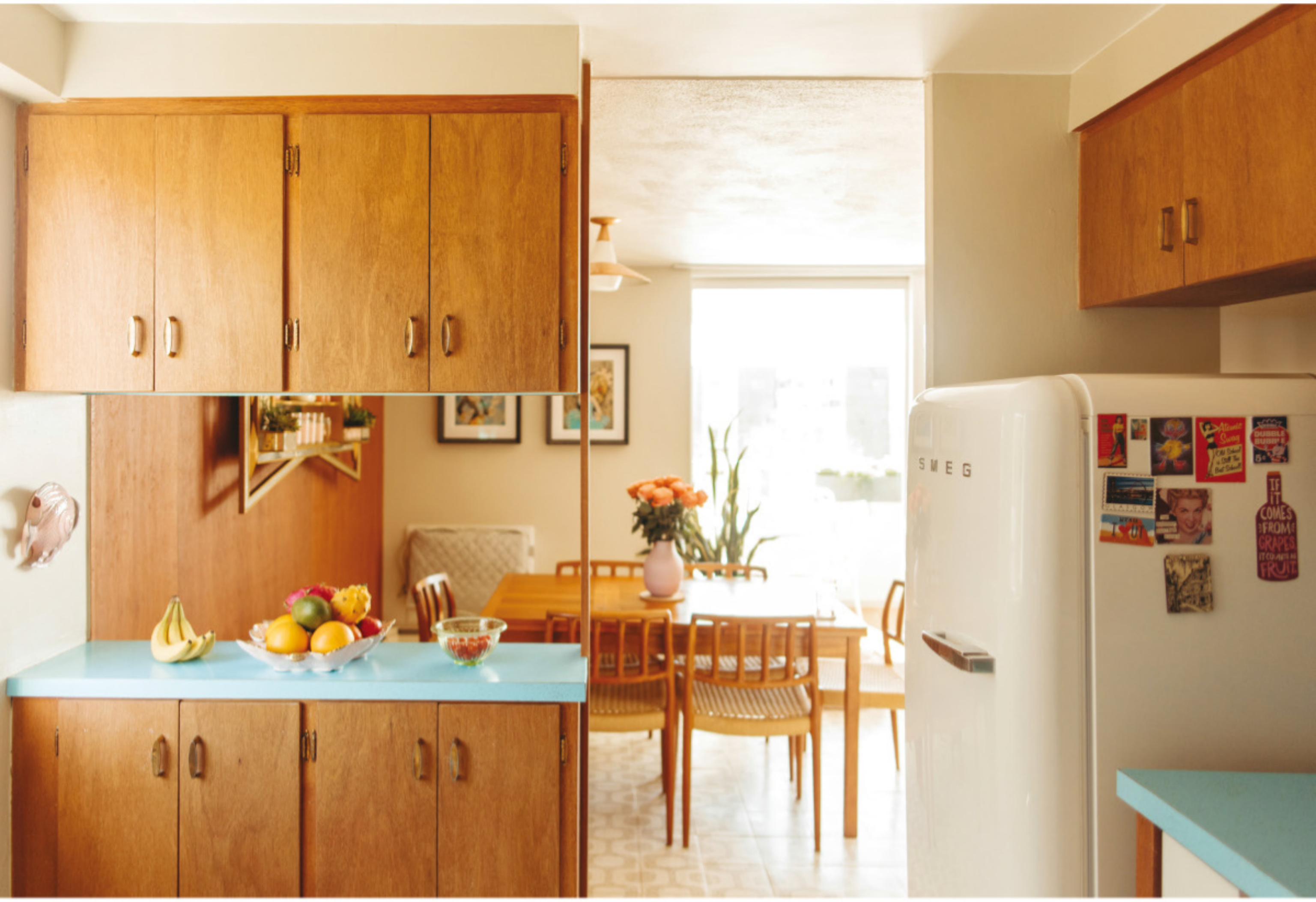
above: The original built-in planter remains and is one of the first things you see when you walk in the door. Also one of the first things you see are those closet doors. The previous owner had put in Quaker doors, which was an eyesore for Wendi since it did not match styles at all with the rest of the house. She replaced the doors with curtains while she searched for someone who could make bifold doors for her. It took six months of searching, but the effort paid off. You'd never know they weren't original. **bottom, right:** The diamond shapes and vintage figurines add a playful, vintage touch.

Sometimes diamonds in the rough take quite a bit of polishing, but they sure do sparkle once the process is complete! That was certainly the case for this Thomas Hite designed 1964 condo in the Chessman neighborhood of Denver.

A CHAIR, A COCKROACH AND A CONVERSATION

Wendi Malone was eight years old, a Kroehler slipper chair her family inherited from a neighbor inspired her lifelong love of Mid Century Modern style and has been with her through many moves to many countries. She still has it. When she moved back to Denver from Australia recently, Wendi contacted Mid Mod Denver realtor Kimber Dempsey about finding condos in the area. The 1964 Lafayette Street property came up in their search, and after seeing photos online, Wendi almost dismissed it. The only thing that got her to change her mind was that she spotted built-in planters in the photos. The building was close by, so Wendi, her mom, and Kimber walked over to take a look.

Wendi and dog Timmy enjoy the comfort of their renovated condo.



above: The SMEG refrigerator was the perfect fit for the space, not just because of its retro silhouette but also because it fit the cutout space and opened towards the open part of the kitchen rather than towards the counter. Also, note that the underside of the floating cabinets are blue to coordinate with the Formica countertops.

opposite, top: The home office with cork floor, an inviting rug, couch and walkout onto the lanai, offers a relaxed space for working from home.

opposite, bottom: The birdcage wall accent is an estate sale score.

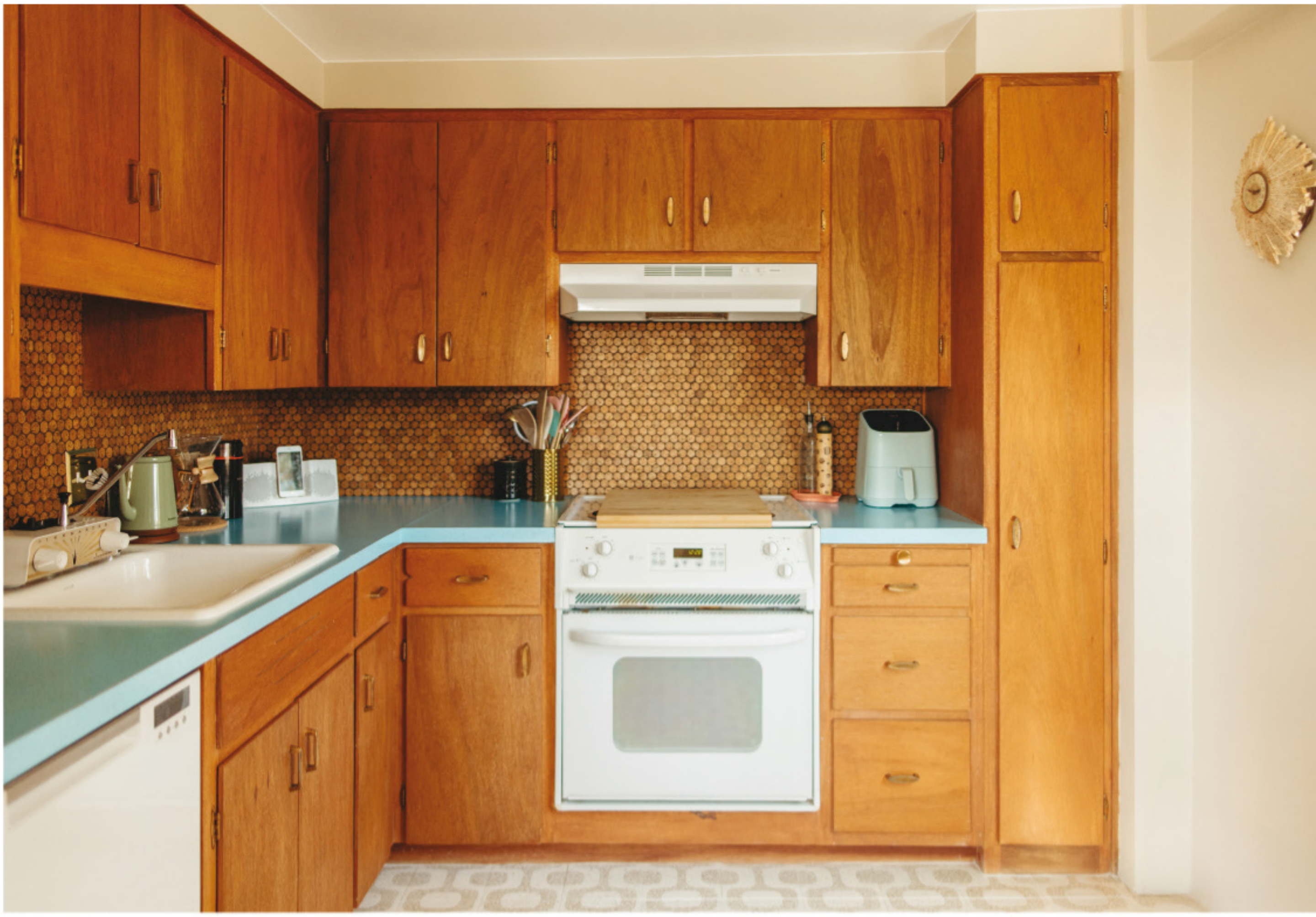
"The photos were bad," Wendi recalls, "but in person was worse. There was a maggot-infested cockroach in the oven. Everything was painted an unattractive brown or pink. But the original cabinets and hardware in the kitchen were still there along with the built-in planters." After seeing the 1,050-square foot 2-bedroom 2-bath unit with a 64-foot wide lanai/balcony, Wendi went out with her mom and Kimber for drinks to talk things over. Her mom pointed out that, despite the cockroach and terrible brown walls, it had everything Wendi was looking for with many original details still intact. "Anyone else is going to make it a white box," her mom said.

"I could see the beauty behind the horror, but it was an emotional negotiation," Wendi says. She remembers wrestling over the decision for a few days before putting in an offer. When she did, the offer was accepted that same day.

LET THE WORK BEGIN

Wendi, with substantial help from her mom, got to work. "It took three days of cleaning before we could even start any demos. The carpets probably hadn't been vacuumed in at least two years, and every surface was covered in grease," Wendi says.

The kitchen cabinets were original, complete with the original brass pulls, but they had been subjected to six layers of paint that took Wendi and her mom three weeks of full-time work to strip—even with power sanders. All that work paid off, though, because the cabinets' original wood now sees the light of day.



Wendi knew she wanted Formica countertops and chose a blue to lend the space a bit of masculinity to contrast with the sparkles, and she echoed that color by making the underside of the cabinets blue. Wendi wanted cohesion, and knowing that she'd opt for cork flooring, the backsplash with cork is "a complement to the color of the cabinets, the flooring, and it softens sound coming from the other units," she says.

The oven is original. After removing any trace of that cockroach with a deep cleaning, Wendi realized that it didn't make sense to replace the oven because the cutout for it was only 25 inches. Rather than cut into the counter or replace the oven with the exact same new one, the only model available in 25 inches, Wendi opted to simply keep the (newly cleaned) original.

The apartment renovation was a real labor of love. Wendi laid the cork flooring herself, which was more of a challenge than she'd bargained for because of floor heaters she had to get under and a not-quite level floor.

above: After three weeks of stripping the various layers of paint, stain and shellac off the original 1964 cabinets, the results speak for themselves. Their warm wood texture and original pulls add that 60s wood warmth to the kitchen.

below: The vintage post-WWII faucet came from a small vendor in Minnesota, and Wendi loves that it's an unexpected and fun detail.

opposite: One of the turnoffs for Wendi when she first toured the condo were the lighting fixtures. They were nondescript "boob lights." One of her renovation priorities was addressing the lighting situation, and the copper UFO shaped lighting fixture in the dining room offers warmth and personality.

DISHMASTER

She carefully selected and hung the wallpaper herself and chose a diamond theme that reoccurs throughout the home. Most everything is secondhand or inherited and comes with a story. For instance, Wendi went to an estate sale hosted by a man named Tony. Tony told Wendi, half jokingly, that anything she saw in the house was for sale. She took him up on it. She'd come for glassware, but she also found many gems among things from Tony's mom: A diamond light fixture, vintage sliding mirror compartment, vintage wallpaper with a jester and diamond pattern and a white and pink outdoor dining set.

In the ensuite bath, the original terrazzo and white salt and pepper tile were still there, but were very dirty. Wendi called vendor after vendor looking for someone who could restore it. "Most laughed at me," Wendi says, but she finally found someone who worked with her to restore it. The pink Formica countertop and sink is original, and vintage accents from Tony's mom complete the space.

HOME SWEET HOME

One of Wendi's favorite details about the renovated condo is the views to the mountains and lanai access from every room. Her home now literally sparkles from the flecks in the Formica countertops and terrazzo to the bedroom wallpaper that glistens when the sun hits it each morning.

She and her dog Timmy enjoy the uncluttered comfort of the 1964 condo that is nevertheless filled with fun, personal touches. After all that elbow grease, now the home is a place she can kick up her feet and relax, surrounded by the warmth of wood and an aesthetic she loves. She spared the place from becoming "another white box," and the next owner won't have to unearth original features from layers of grease and unfortunate paint choices.

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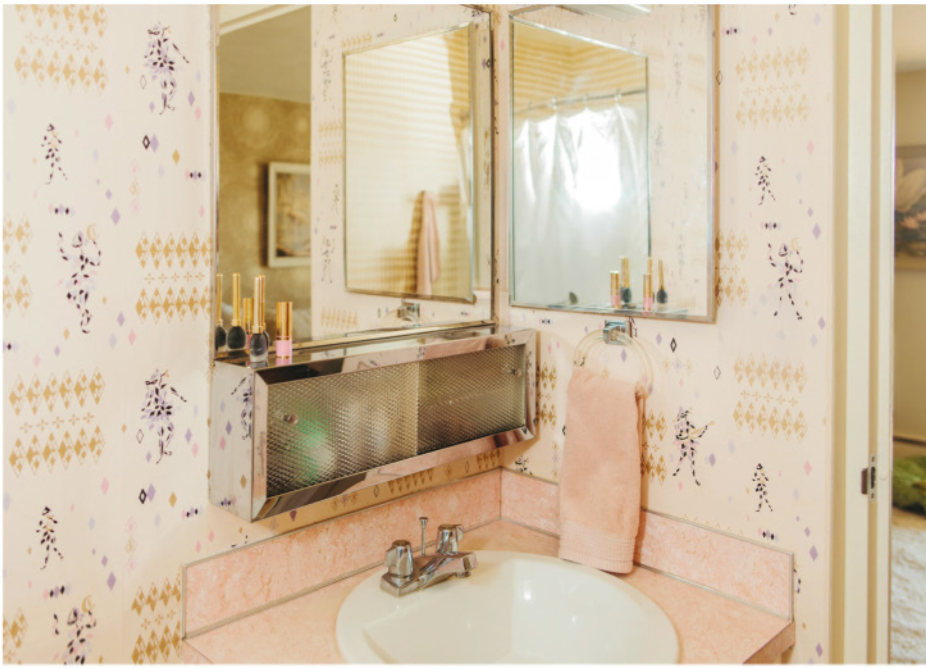
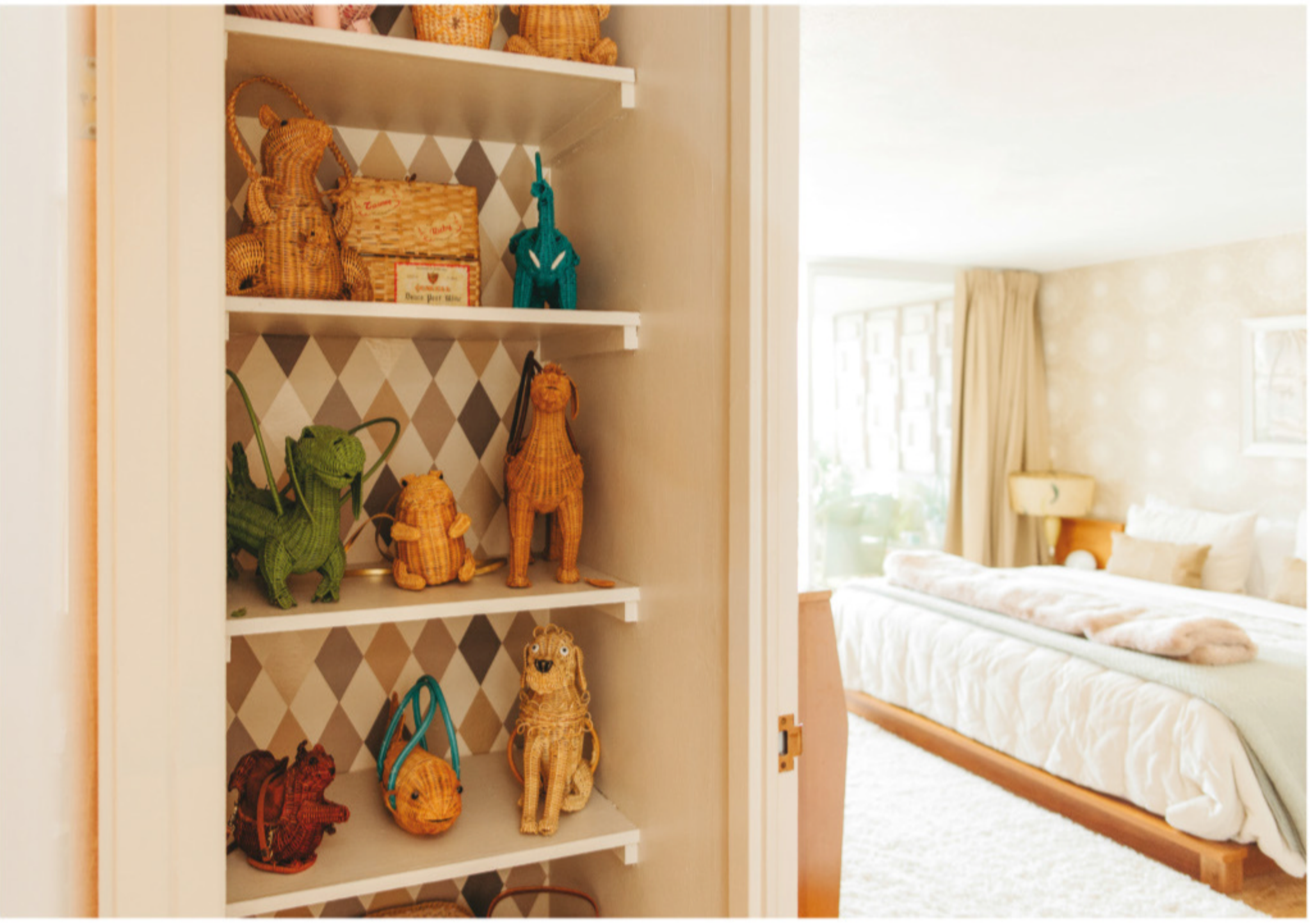




top, right: The sink and pink countertop are original while the sliding door organizer and even the jester wallpaper are vintage scores from an estate sale hosted by a man name Tony who sold her a lot of the finds in her home. Tony found a way to peel the wallpaper off, and Wendi was able to hang it while keeping it all intact.

above: Mostly vintage wicker purses make for a fun hallway vignette. The collection began with the pink pig and grew into a hobby. A few are new, but most are vintage. They are a fun and potentially expensive collectible since it's rare to find them in good condition.

opposite, top: Wendi chose the wallpaper for its color and sunburst pattern, but she was delighted to see that it sparkles in the morning light as sunrise fills the bedroom. She chose soft pink and green hues and a bird theme for the primary bedroom. The Turner flamingo art from the 1940s fits in perfectly.

below, left: The vintage white and pink dining set came from Tony's mom's collection.
below, right: Wendi's mom made the abstract geometric art with styrofoam molds covered in concrete and held by green dowels.
opposite: AllModern dividers outside continue the division of space from inside. Each section has a distinct flair as an outdoor room. The blue Acapulco chairs with pink throw pillows in this section continue the color scheme from the living room.

THE LAFAYETTE BUILDING

History stands tall at this 1964 treasure

Josh Robinson, Senior Project Designer at Kephart Architects and President of Docomomo Colorado is knowledgeable and passionate about modern multifamily housing referring to them as "quiet giants" of Mid Century Modern design. Buildings like the one Wendi's unit sits in were part of a larger story across the nation and in Denver in particular.

Housing boom and explosive growth.
Before the mid century, Denver was a bit of a sleeper town, and the neighborhood where the Lafayette building is situated had become "seedy." In the Gold Rush, Josh explains, the neighborhood became the site of Victorian mansions for those who struck it rich. When for-

tunes changed and the Gold Rush tapered off, those mansions became divided into tenements or were completely neglected. All of a sudden, post-WWII, the massive need for housing revitalized the neighborhood, which became the center of multifamily housing development in Denver. To this day, the neighborhood maintains a lovely juxtaposition of Victorian homes, stately mature trees and modern high rises.

Market difference.
Today we think of multifamily units as stepping stones into homeownership, but in the mid century, that was not the case. "It was really about lifestyle choice because you could buy single family homes for cheaper," Josh says. In vintage ads for apartments, for instance, you'd see everyone "dressed in tuxedos and evening gowns." It was about luxurious modern living and enjoying the perks of indoor-outdoor living without having to maintain a yard.

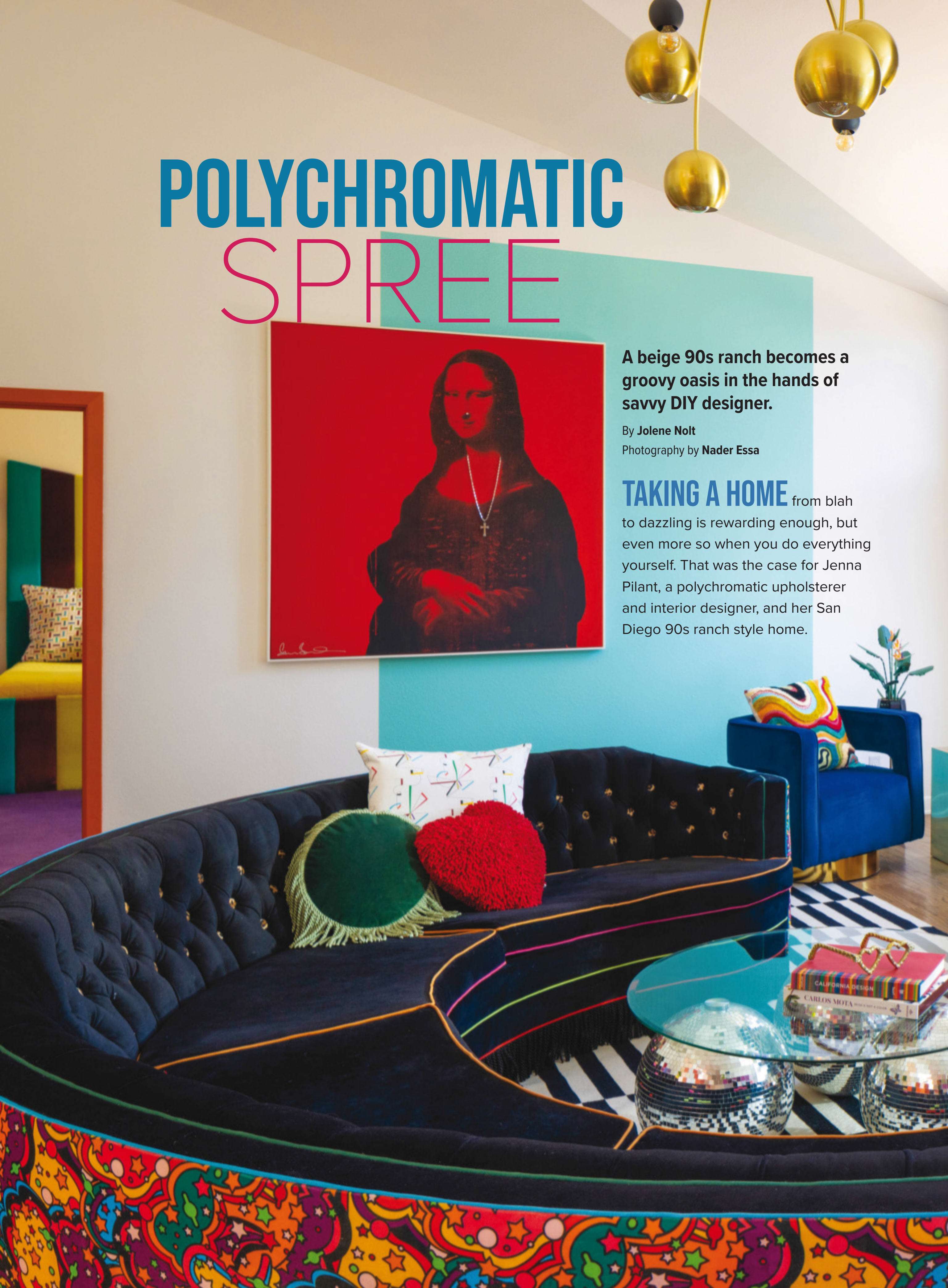
What we know about the architect.
Thomas Hite graduated from Denver University's architecture program in 1952. The program was short-lived, but during Hite's time, it was headed by European émigré and Holocaust survivor Eugene Sternberg, who championed modern style and the importance of multifamily homes. We also know that Hite started his own architecture practice in 1959 and completed several unusual projects, most notably Windsor Gardens, a 1959 golf course condo community and housing co-op, a senior housing project and a church called Mile High, which is featured as the McDonald's in the Woody Allen film Sleeper. While we lack a unifying narrative for Hite's career, we do see a theme of thinking about multifamily housing.

Architectural achievements of the Lafayette building.
"The building has an unsual framing system only two inches thick throughout the unit," Josh says. "It uses a wire frame without studs, which cuts down on sound transmission and gives square footage back to the living space." Josh worked on a project with a similar framing system in a different building, which was tested and found that the system passed contemporary standards for sound proofing.

Another clever aspect of the design is how bathrooms, closets and kitchens act as sound buffering spaces between units and the hallways. "Within Wendi's unit, Hite uses a closet between the two rooms to dampen the sound transfer. It´s really thoughtful." Yet another fantastic feature is the way the floor-to-ceiling windows really do go right up to the ceiling, making the 8-foot ceiling feel more ample.

The underacknowledged appeal of MCM multifamily housing today.
Josh sees modern multifamily housing as "Courbusier's domino principles brought to life." There's so much elegance and indoor-outdoor ease of living in MCM multifamily units that contemporary units lack. While MCM design can come with a high price point for a single family home, for a multifamily unit, it tends to be much more affordable. "I would love to see mid-century multifamily homes take off," he says.

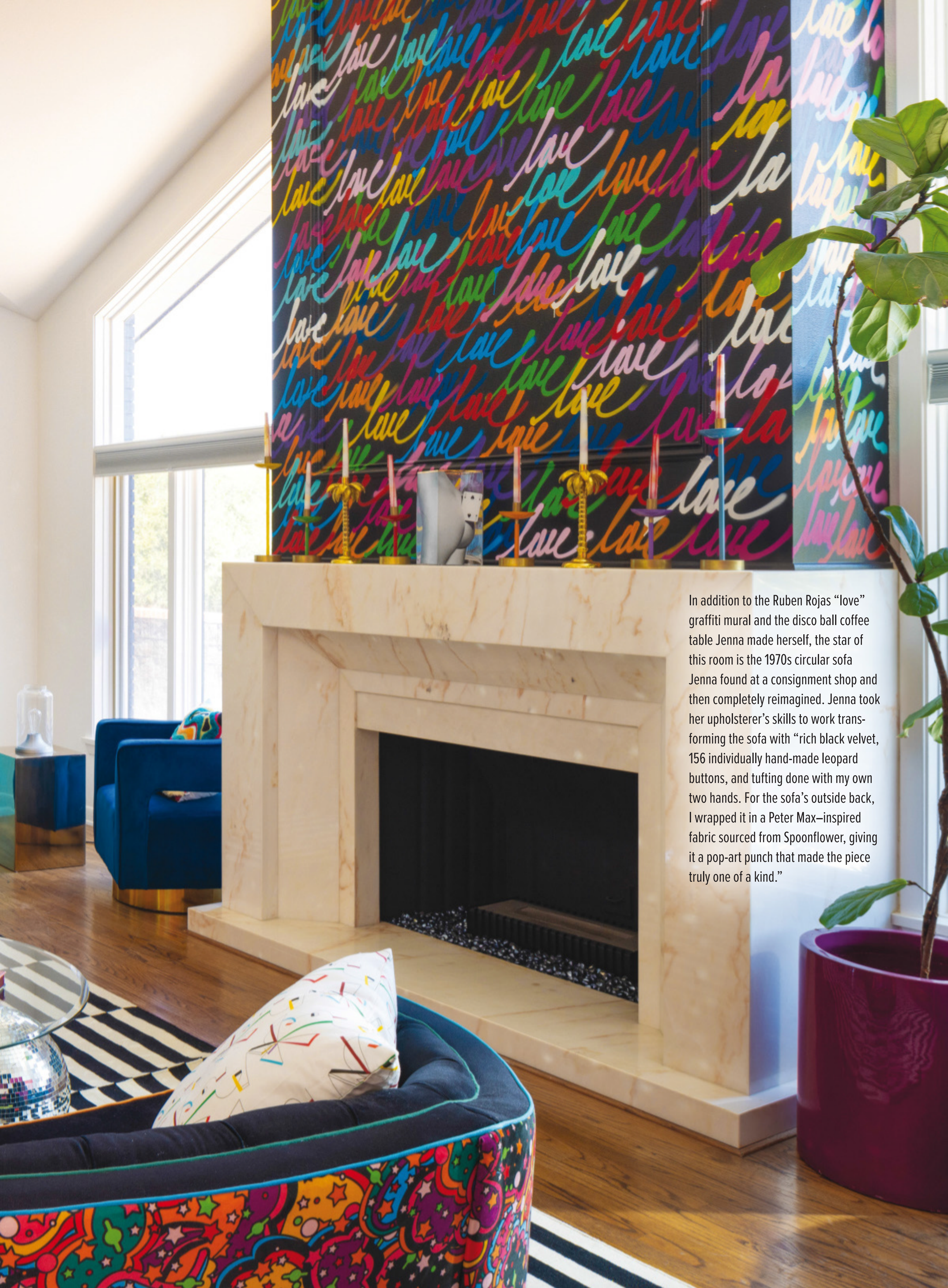
POLYCHROMATIC SPREE



A beige 90s ranch becomes a groovy oasis in the hands of savvy DIY designer.

By **Jolene Nolt**
Photography by **Nader Essa**

TAKING A HOME from blah to dazzling is rewarding enough, but even more so when you do everything yourself. That was the case for Jenna Pilant, a polychromatic upholsterer and interior designer, and her San Diego 90s ranch style home.



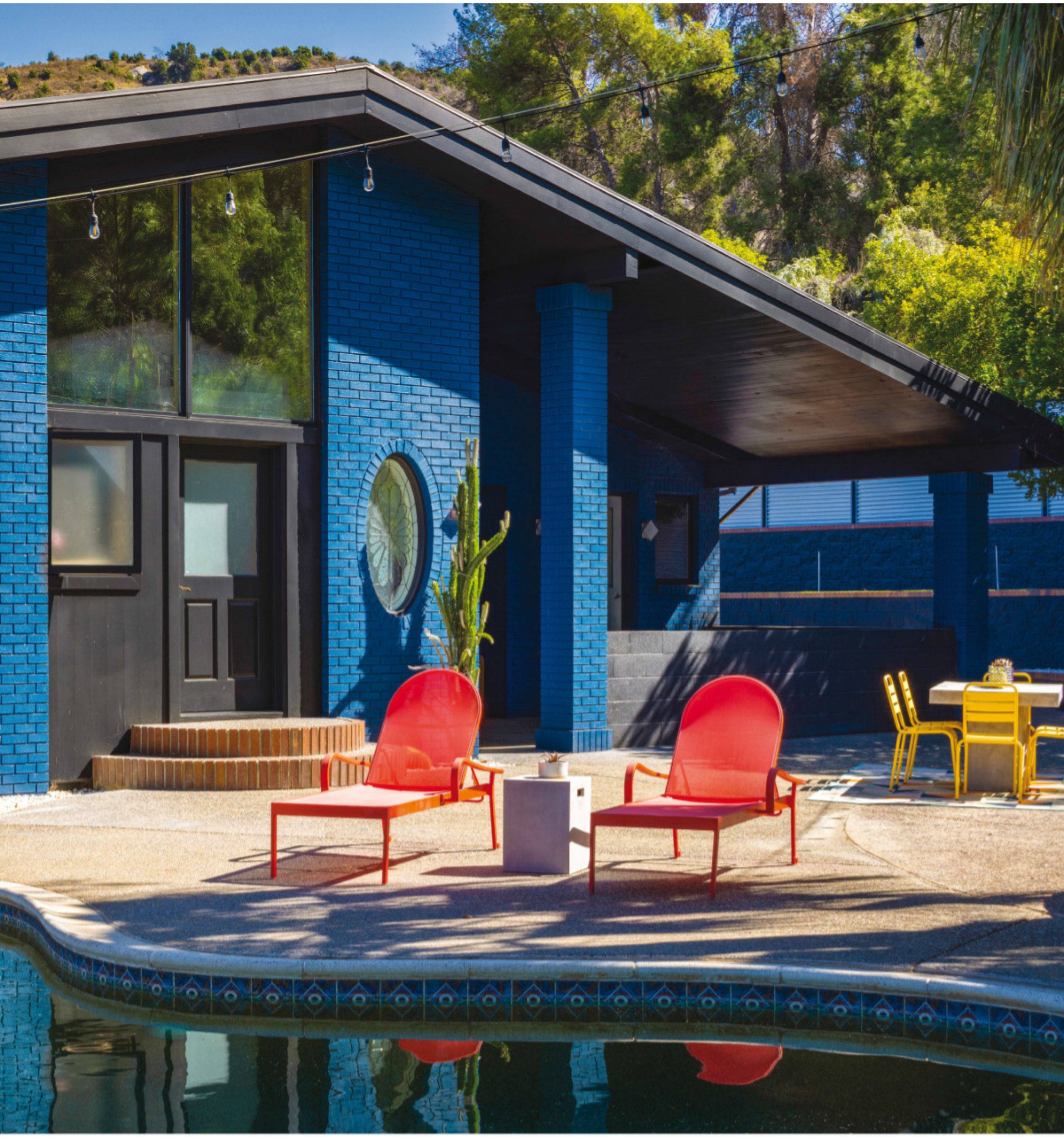
In addition to the Ruben Rojas "love" graffiti mural and the disco ball coffee table Jenna made herself, the star of this room is the 1970s circular sofa Jenna found at a consignment shop and then completely reimagined. Jenna took her upholsterer's skills to work transforming the sofa with "rich black velvet, 156 individually hand-made leopard buttons, and tufting done with my own two hands. For the sofa's outside back, I wrapped it in a Peter Max–inspired fabric sourced from Spoonflower, giving it a pop-art punch that made the piece truly one of a kind."

THE BEFORE: "FIFTY SHADES OF BEIGE"

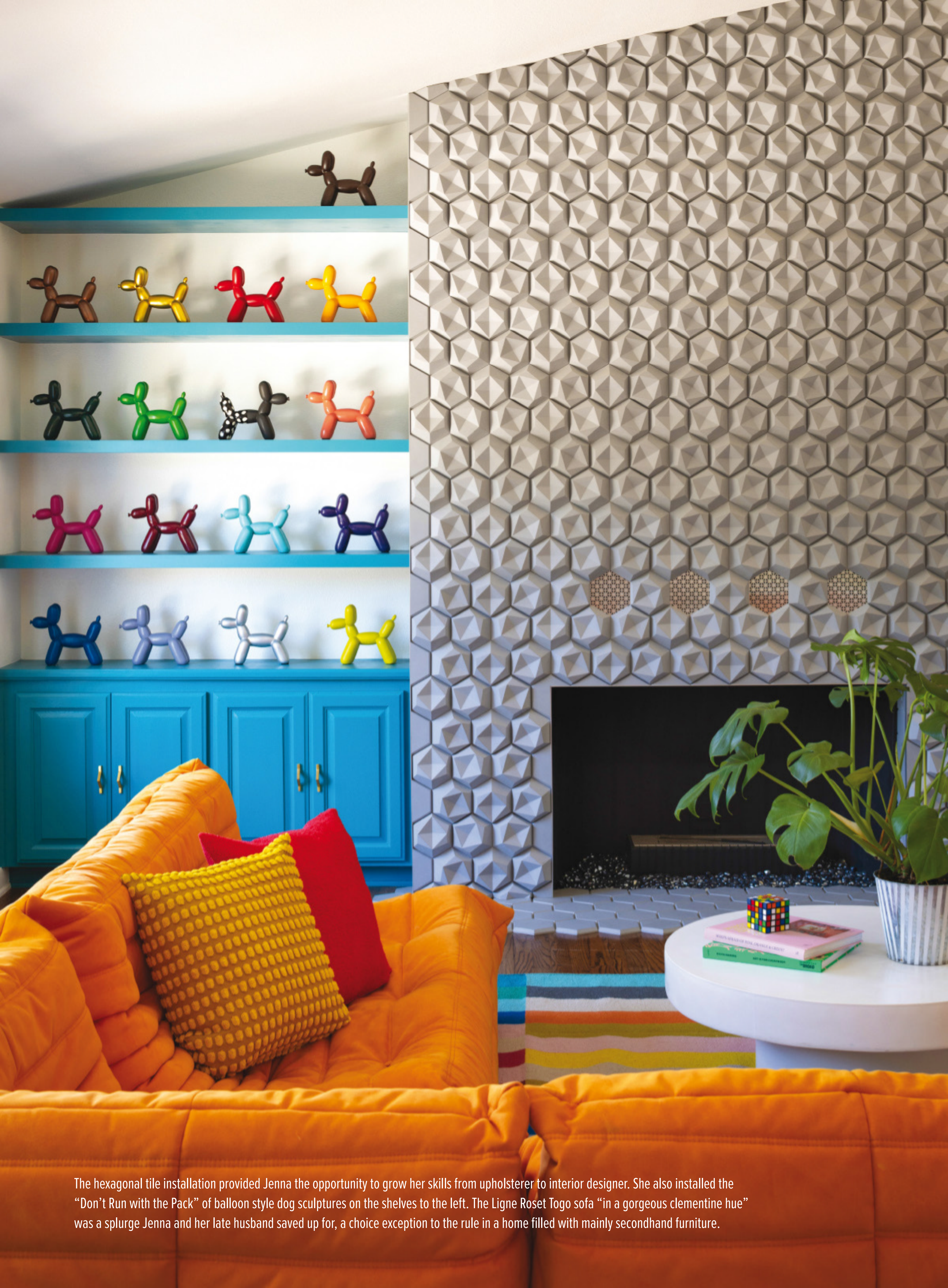
For Jenna and her late husband, the location of the home in San Diego's Pauma Valley Country Club was key. Another huge selling point of the home was that it was essentially a "blank canvas."

Jenna elaborates, "Almond on beige on ivory on taupe. . . . layer upon layer of neutral sameness just waiting to be reimagined." Another attractive feature was the home's ranch style and Midwestern touches. "While it was built in the 1990s," Jenna says, "I loved that it was a ranch-style home. I knew with the right vision, I could transform it into an 'atomic ranch' inspired space."

Jenna, who hails from Nebraksa, also responded to the home's history. "Built by a couple from Chicago, the home had a basement (rare in California) and was constructed of brick, which gave it an unmistakably Midwestern feel. As a Nebraska farm girl myself, that touch of the Midwest spoke to me instantly."



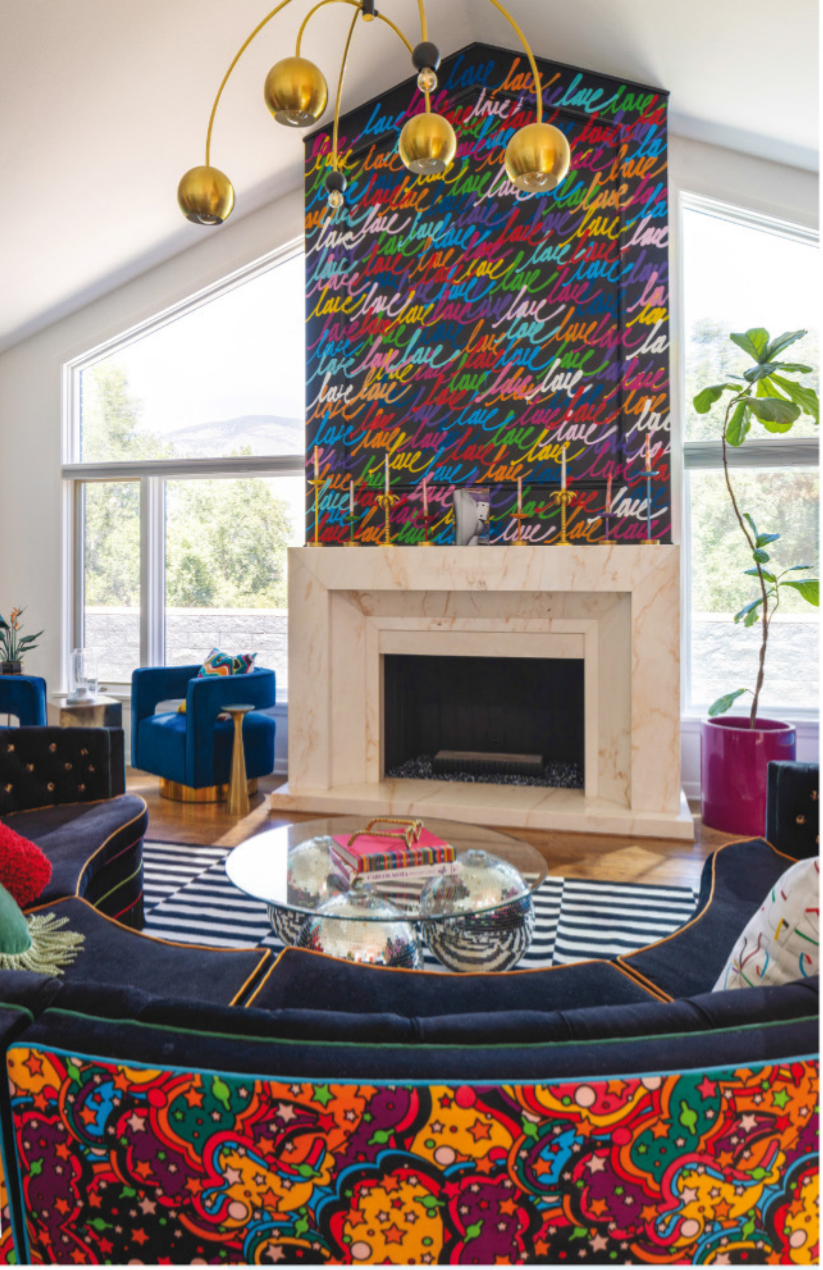
above: The theme of color continues to the backyard with red chaises and yellow outdoor dining furniture against the blue-painted brick.
opposite, top: The "deep, nautical-inspired blue" that Jenna chose for the exterior paint color inspired the home's name, The Blue Flamingo. Painting the brick turned out to be more labor-intensive than Jenna expected, but, she says, "the payoff was undeniable. The transformation gave the house a bold new identity, one that reflected both my aesthetic and our story."
opposite,bottom: While the entryway is not a large space, it does set the tone for what you will find in the rest of the home. For the first pop of color someone will see upon entering the house, Jenna chose "a chandelier from Sazerac Stitches, a New Orleans–based company whose bold, playful lighting immediately hinted at the vibrancy waiting deeper inside the home."



The hexagonal tile installation provided Jenna the opportunity to grow her skills from upholsterer to interior designer. She also installed the "Don't Run with the Pack" of balloon style dog sculptures on the shelves to the left. The Ligne Roset Togo sofa "in a gorgeous clementine hue" was a splurge Jenna and her late husband saved up for, a choice exception to the rule in a home filled with mainly secondhand furniture.

right: The fabulous custom upholdetered 70s circular sofa and the custom mural wall serve as the colorful centerpieces of the formal living room—so much so that you may completely miss the disco ball coffee table that Jenna custom made.

below: Jenna stands in the renovated dining room, surrounded by the color and playful designs she loves.



When it came to the process of transformation itself, Jenna realized how difficult it was for contractors to come out to northeast San Diego County. With her farmgirl, can-do attitude and ample creativity as an upholsterer, she decided to do the work herself.

SETTING THE VISION

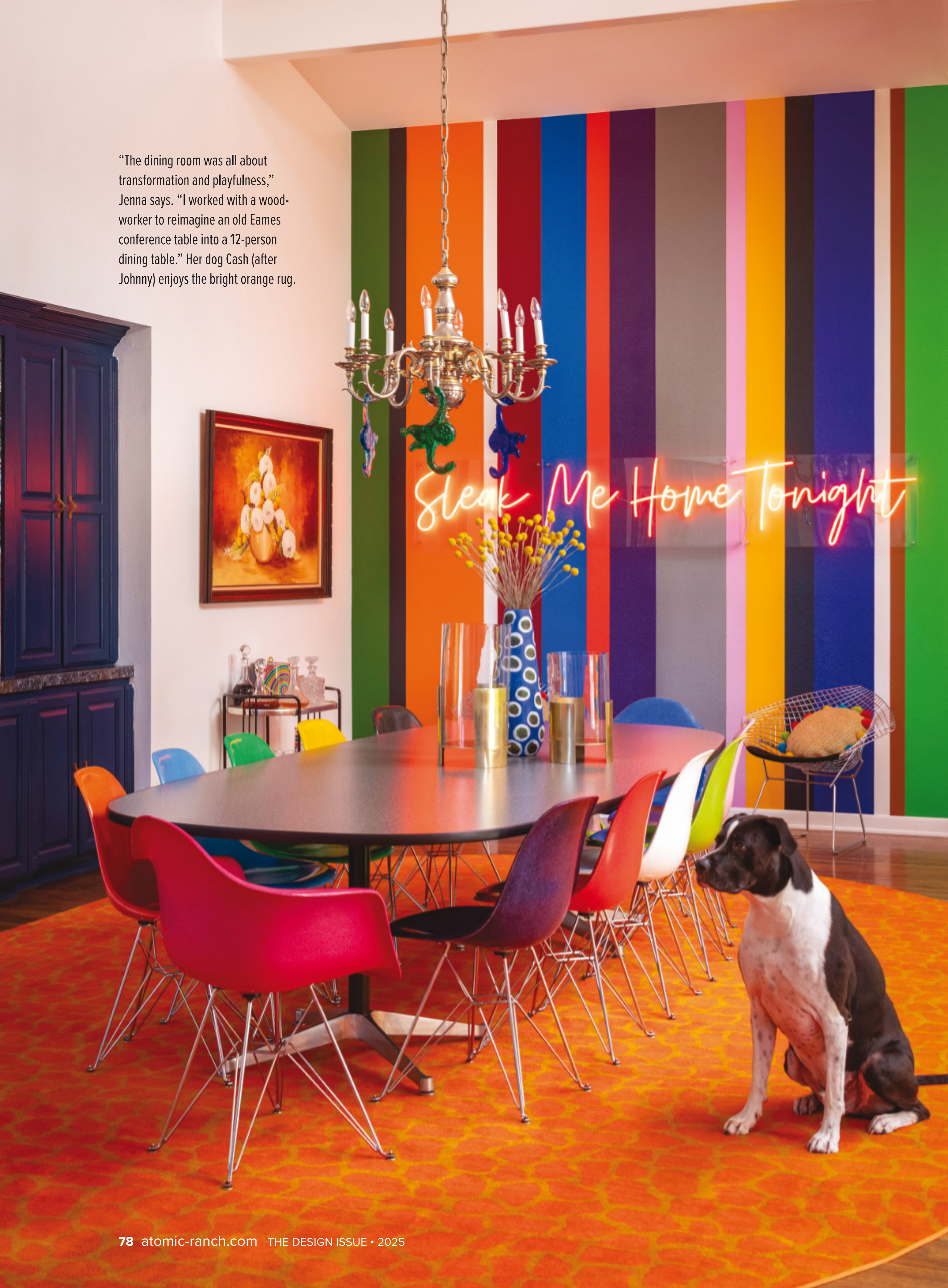
Project by project, room by room, Jenna set to work. She learned to tile, she reimagined furniture and reupholstered it herself, and all with a vision towards imbuing the home with color and personality.

Jenna explains, "As a polychromatic designer, color is always at the heart of my work, but so is reimagining furniture through upholstery and hands-on projects. Much of the home's decor was a mix of old and new: secondhand pieces I brought back to life with my own two hands alongside select contemporary finds.

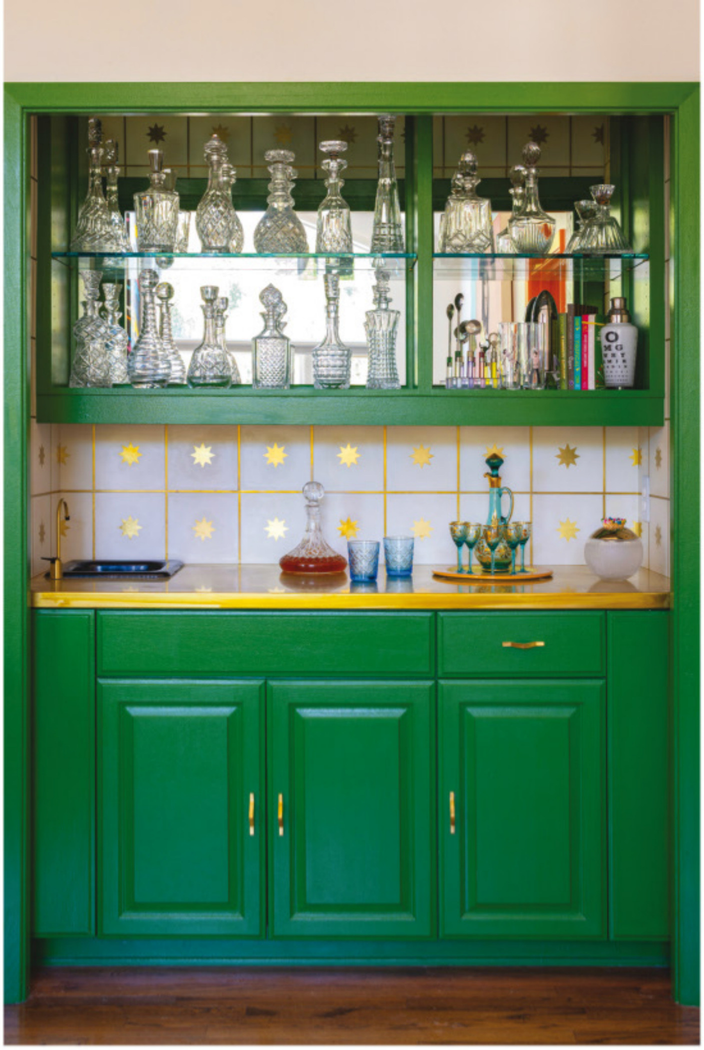
DON'T BE AFRAID OF COLOR

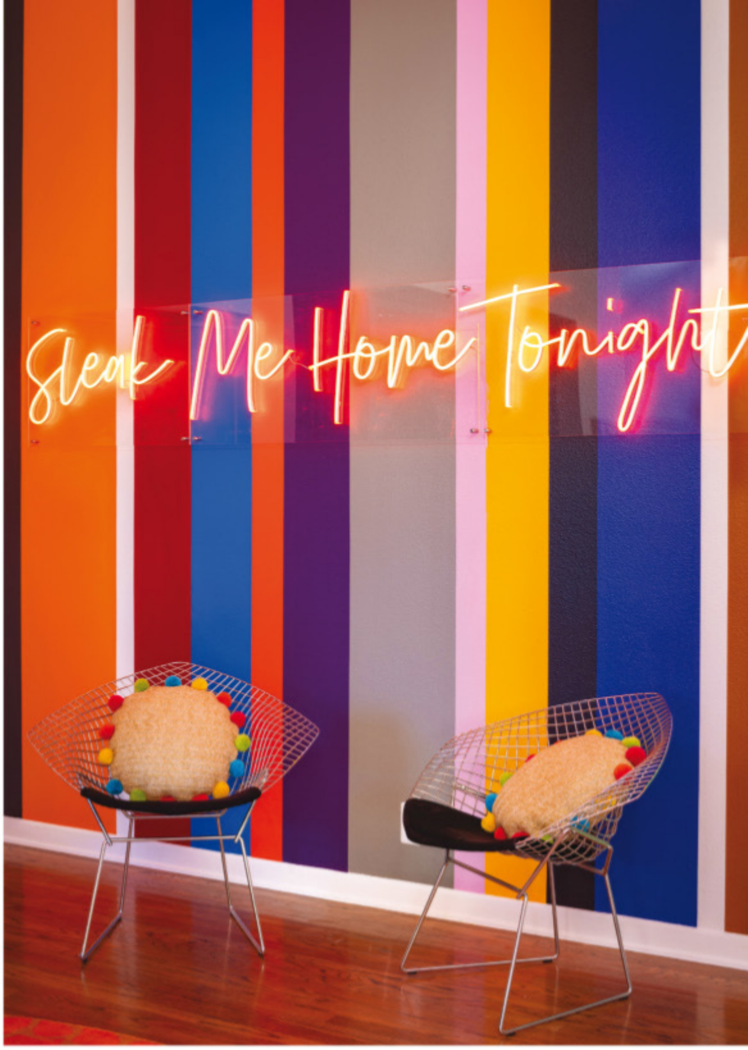
"Most people say they're afraid of color, but they're not. They're afraid of making a decision and living with that decision," Jenna told HGTV. Her role as a polychromatic designer is to help people make decisions they are happy with. To do that, it helps to have a vision in mind. It doesn't have to be an elaborate master plan, either. Just pick something central and build around that.

For instance, Jenna's office was built around her lifelong love for the color yellow, hailing all the way back to the yellow nursery she was brought home to. From there, the painting with its complementary purple provides color contrast and the reupholstered sleeper sofa with leopard print plays off the yellow tones while adding some contrast.



"The dining room was all about transformation and playfulness," Jenna says. "I worked with a woodworker to reimagine an old Eames conference table into a 12-person dining table." Her dog Cash (after Johnny) enjoys the bright orange rug.



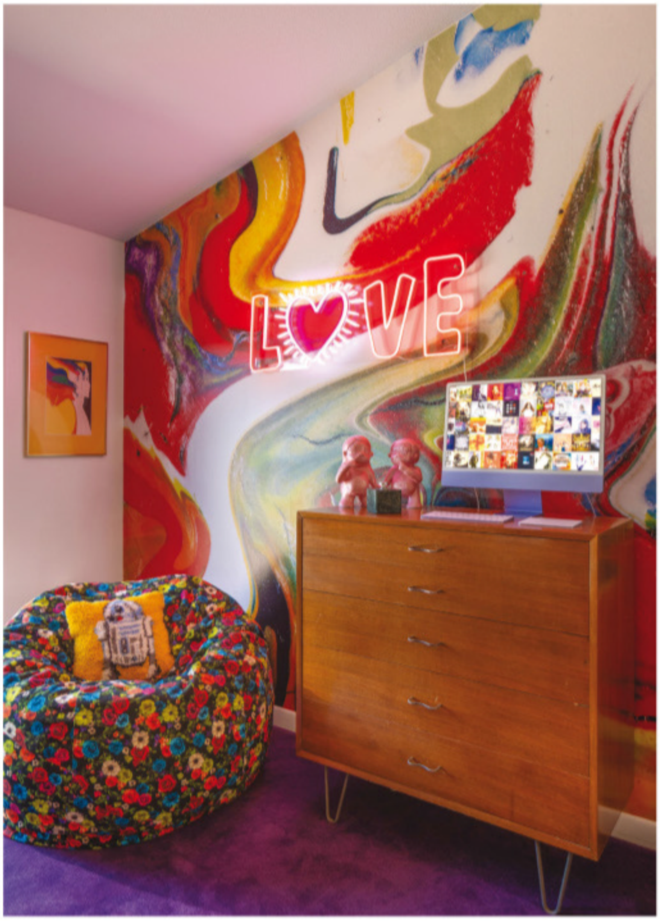


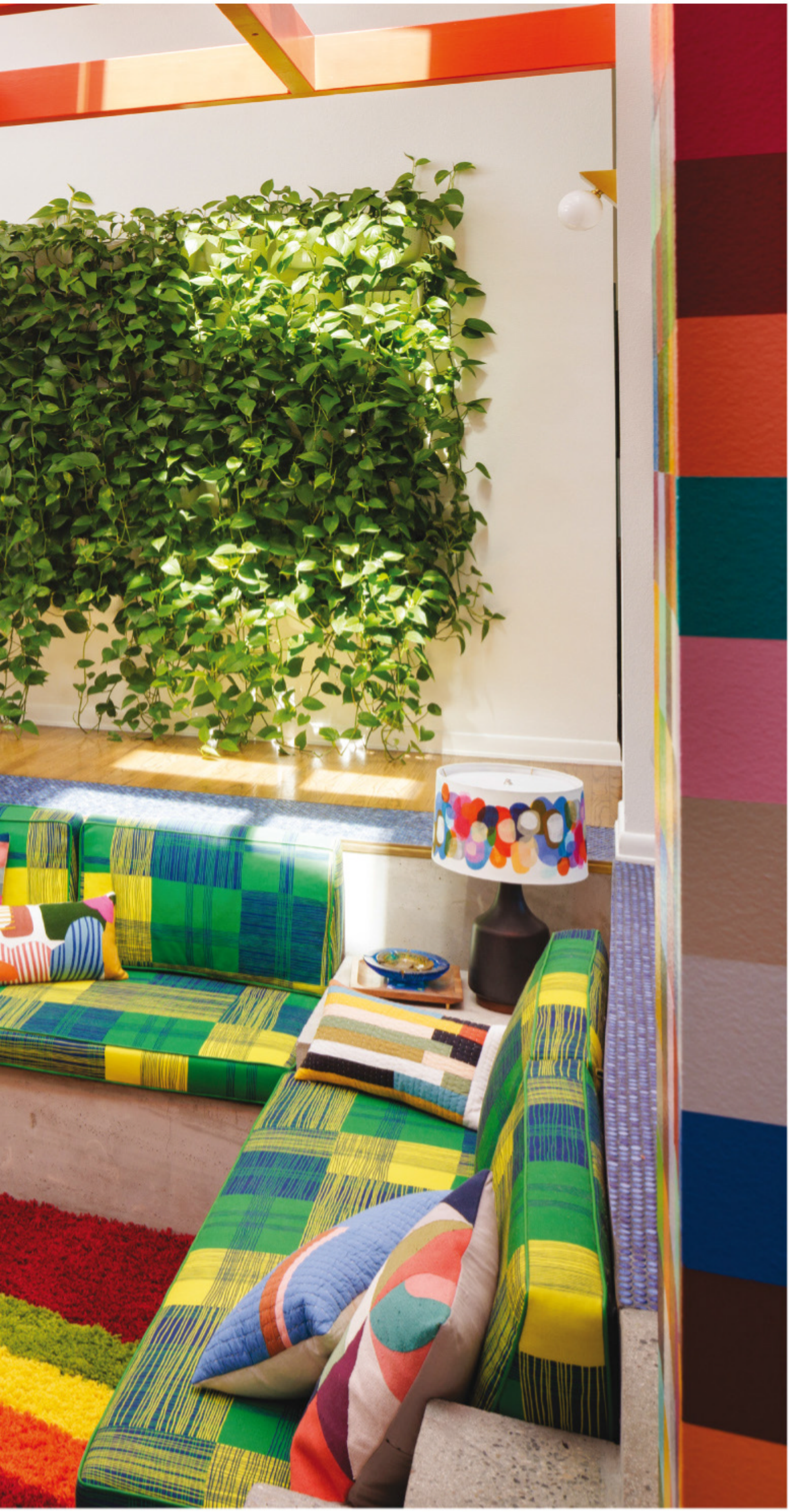
above, left: The built-in bar was original to the home, but Jenna put her designer's stamp on it with "John Deere-inspired green cabinetry" and tile with brass inlay starbursts. Rather than use gold grout, which ended up looking cheap, Jenna sourced brass from a metal supplier and cut and installed it for a custom grout alternative that adds genuine shimmer to the space.

above, right: Jenna explains the origins of the saying lit up in the neon wall installation: "As a Nebraska farm girl raised on cattle, and a former music major, I took the classic 'Take Me Home Tonight' and turned it into 'Steak Me Home Tonight.' It might only make me laugh, but it perfectly captured the quirky, colorful spirit of the room."

right: This nook of the primary bedroom has a playful feel with the neon love sign and swirled pattern of the wallpaper.

"The walls themselves became part of the art, with hand-painted murals adding layers of personality and story." The artwork in the home, Jenna says, is all about connection rather than names. "Pieces that spoke to Darrell and me, whether a vintage find or something created by a local San Diego artist, found their place here."





LEARNING ON THE GO

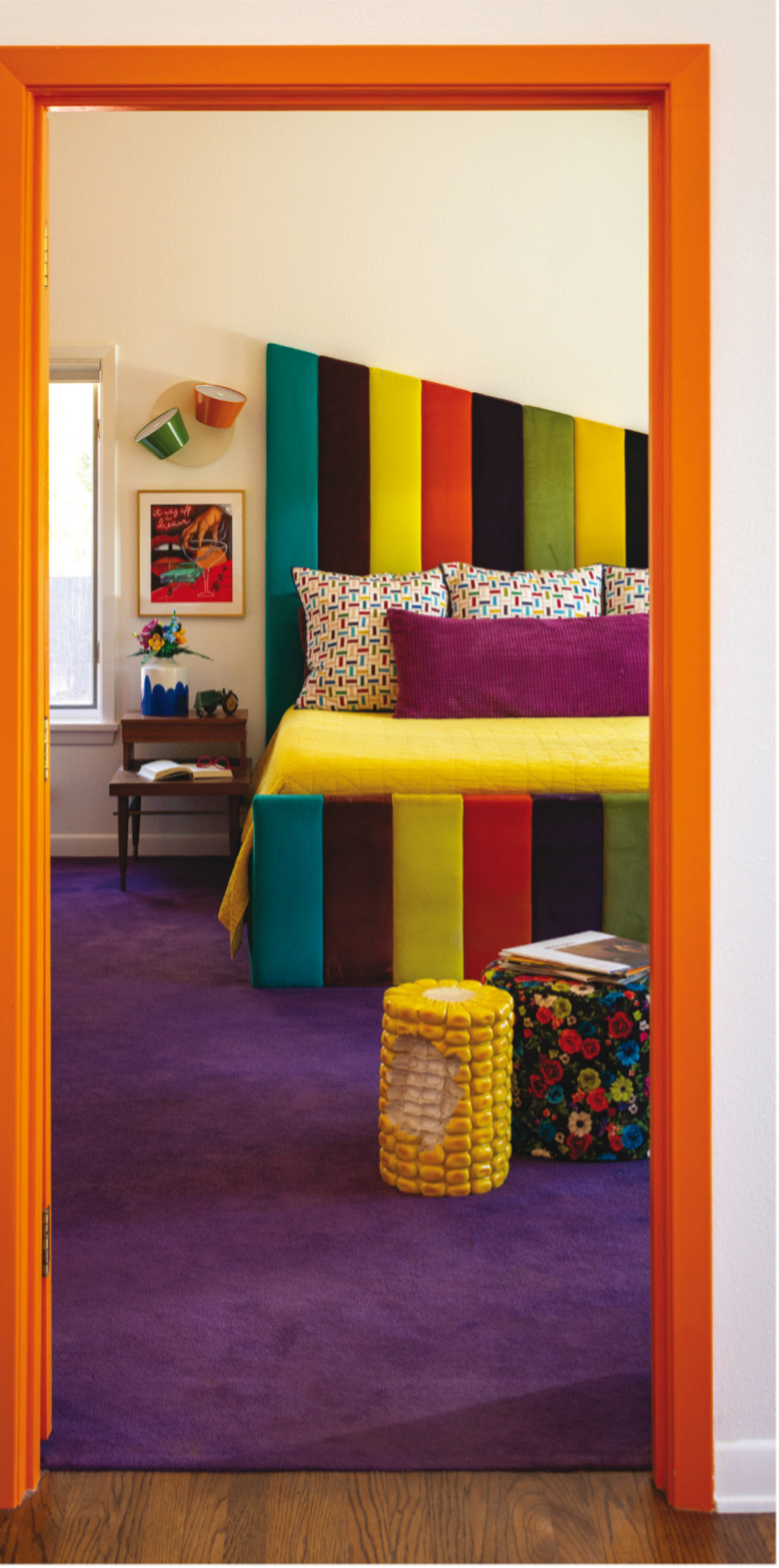
Jenna's work on this home, and particularly beginning with the family room, grew her creativity. Jenna explains, "The family room became the setting for my very first Room Bloom YouTube project—the one that catapulted me from upholsterer to full-blown designer."

She got started with the 3D hexagonal tile in the family room. "I had never tiled a day in my life," Jenna says, "but one wild hair later I was knee-deep in a very tricky 3D hexagon tile installation. What I thought would be a quick project turned into months of work, but the end result was worth every learning curve."

Her custom designer touches are evident in every room of the house. In the dining room, Jenna added a splash of glam by hand laying disco ball tiles as a mirrored backsplash for a built-in china hutch.

In the formal living room, Jenna added a splash of personality with a vintage 1970s circular sofa she reupholstered with Peter Max–inspired fabric sourced from Spoonflower for "a pop-art punch that made the piece truly one of a kind." However, there was another problem to solve. The marble fireplace surround, while beautiful, was not something Jenna would have picked herself but was too valuable and expensive to replace. So, Jenna says, "I commissioned Los Angeles artist Ruben Rojas, known for his iconic 'Love' spray paint murals, to graffiti the wood structure above in the palette I had woven throughout the home. The result transformed the fireplace into both anchor and artwork."

"From the very first home tour, I knew the atrium would someday become a conversation pit," Jenna says. Thanks to winning The Home Depot's Orange Pitch competition, that dream became a reality.



Jenna chose a plush purple carpet for the bedroom as a nod to the Saguaro Hotel in Palm Springs. "I wanted the room to feel like a bold, joyful nod to that spirit of color," Jenna says. "For the bed itself, I designed, built, and upholstered a custom headboard that became the room's focal point. Using rich velvets in vibrant hues, I created a geometric form that not only played off the wallpaper on the opposite wall, but also mirrored the pitch of the ceiling."

THE ATOMIC ATRIUM PROJECT

When you first walk into the home, you see an atrium. Jenna knew from the first time she walked into the home that she wanted to completely redo this beige-on-beige space for something more exciting. She was delighted to discover that underneath the teak flooring was a concrete basin—the original owner had used it to grow orchids. That meant the foundation was there to turn the atrium into an atomic era inspired conversation pit.

How she went about it is quite the story. Jenna explains, "During the pandemic, I pitched my idea for an 'Atomic Atrium' to The Home Depot as part of the Orange Pitch competition, formerly tied to the Haven Conference in Atlanta. Presenting virtually via Zoom, I won the $10,000 category, and immediately dove into designing and building this dream space. What followed was months of hands-on work: pouring new concrete, installing carpet and tile, wiring in lighting, and designing custom cushions for the sunken seating area. I upholstered each piece myself, turning the basin once used for orchids into a mid-century–inspired conversation pit, perfect for color, laughter, and connection. It was a true labor of love—and fittingly, the last major project I completed in that home."

> “AS A POLYCHROMATIC DESIGNER, **COLOR IS ALWAYS AT THE HEART OF MY WORK,** BUT SO IS REIMAGINING FURNITURE THROUGH UPHOLSTERY AND HANDS-ON PROJECTS.”

BECOMING THE BLUE FLAMINGO

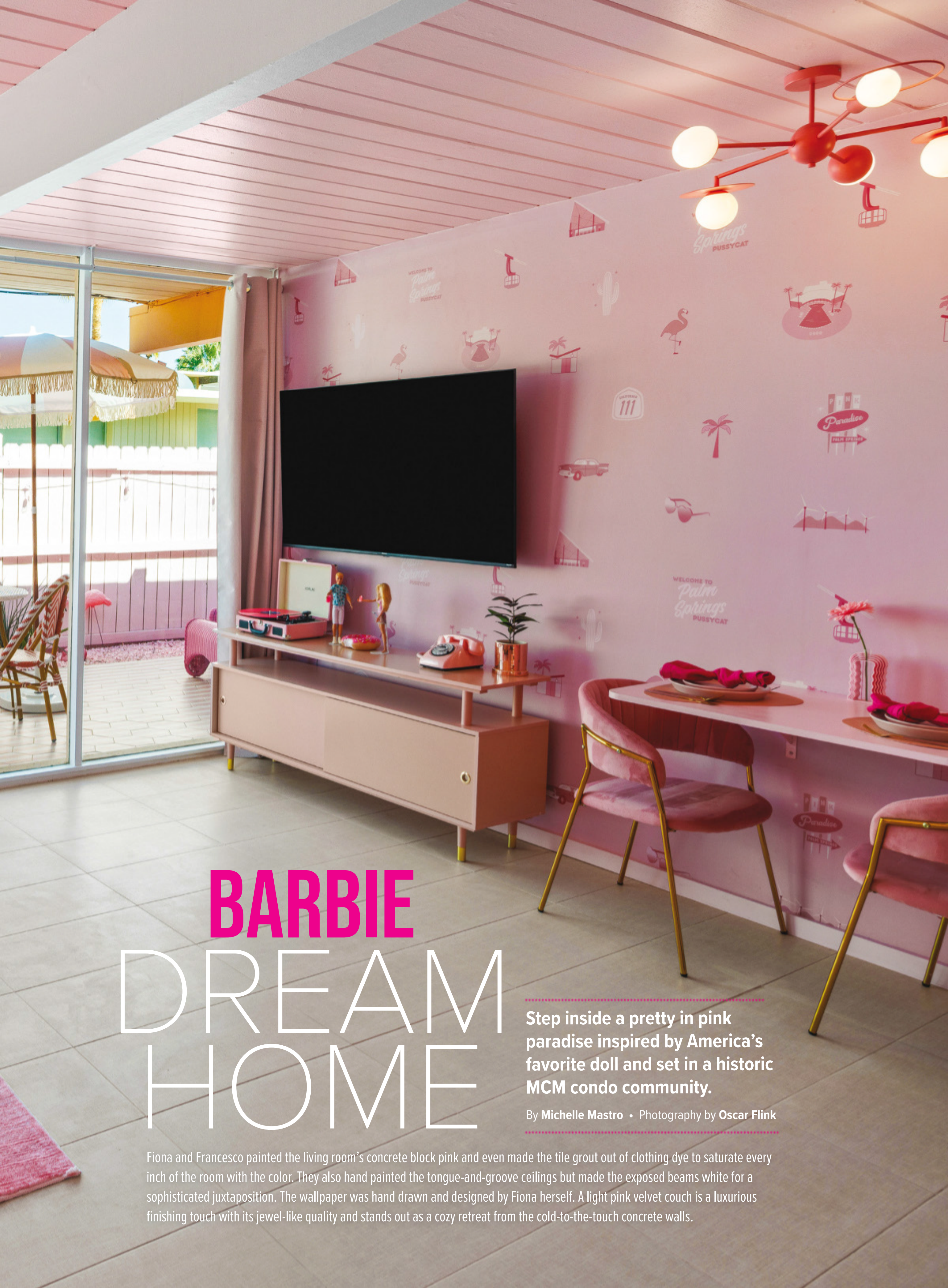
While Jenna responded to the Midwestern feel of the brick exterior, she knew she wanted something more colorful to give a taste of the color within the home from the minute the exterior comes into view. She partnered with The Home Depot and BEHR paint and chose a “deep, nautical-inspired shade of blue.”

Jenna explains, “The transformation gave the house a bold new identity, one that reflected both my aesthetic and our story. That’s how she [the home] came to be known as The Blue Flamingo: when a flock of pigeons meets a flamingo, she stands out, unapologetically herself—and in this case, unapologetically blue.”

SEE SOURCES, PAGE 112

above, right: Jenna’s color choice for her home design office goes back to her childhood nursery. Jenna explains, “I came home from the hospital to a yellow, rainbow-themed nursery—so I’m not sure which came first, the chick or the egg, but yellow has always been my color. It’s exuberantly a happy hue, and so deeply tied to who I am, so it only felt right to paint the cabinetry in a brilliant, joyful shade of yellow.” **above, left:** The rainbow mirror and the flowers in all colors of the rainbow are a playful nod to Jenna’s childhood nursery and the lifelong love of color it inspired.

Jenna is “making lemonade” with this unexpected life path = renovating/living in a 1962 Mayflower mobilehome in Palm Springs, CA. Follow this latest polychromatic project via **@jennapilant** on all socials.



BARBIE DREAM HOME

Step inside a pretty in pink paradise inspired by America's favorite doll and set in a historic MCM condo community.

By **Michelle Mastro** • Photography by **Oscar Flink**

Fiona and Francesco painted the living room's concrete block pink and even made the tile grout out of clothing dye to saturate every inch of the room with the color. They also hand painted the tongue-and-groove ceilings but made the exposed beams white for a sophisticated juxtaposition. The wallpaper was hand drawn and designed by Fiona herself. A light pink velvet couch is a luxurious finishing touch with its jewel-like quality and stands out as a cozy retreat from the cold-to-the-touch concrete walls.

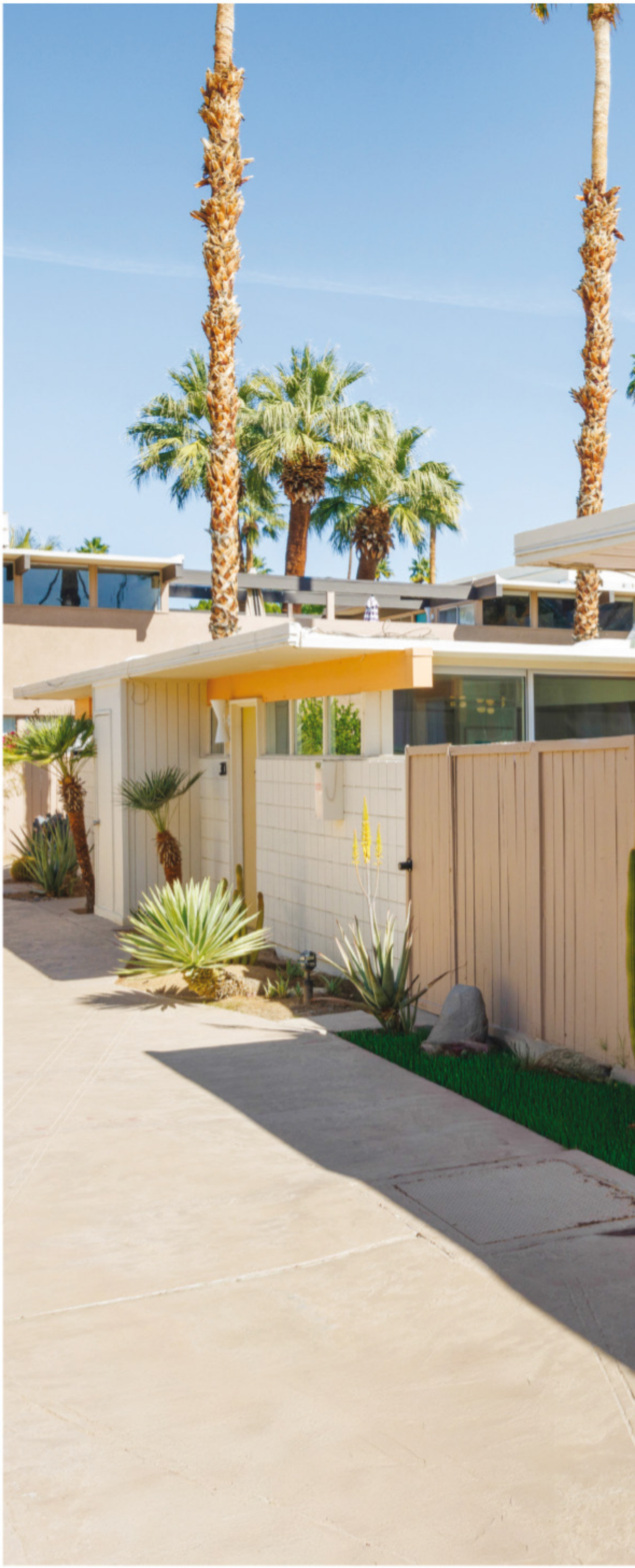
HIDDEN BEHIND an atomic era condo exterior lies a rosy desert dream of a home. Outside, the condo community's HOA requires all facades to retain their classic tangerine trim and crisp white paint hues—the chosen color palette of The Ocotillo Lodge, originally built in 1957 by the architectural firm of William Krisel and Dan Saxon Palmer. But inside, the abode is another story entirely.

Springs
PUSSYCAT

left: Barbie and Ken stand under the living room's TV in their best Palm Springs vacation attire.

below, left: A vibrant pink cactus shaped candle, along with similarly colored dice and gambling chips, sits atop a chic geometric shaped side table, presenting a subtle hint to the stars of Old Hollywood like Frank Sinatra who liked to holiday in Palm Springs when the cameras weren't rolling.

right: The condo complex's HOA restrictions keep the rental's exteriors paying homage to the past: architect William Krisel and Dan Saxon Palmer's original colors and designs. But the results work in the Pink Paradise's favor. The facade belies the pink desert oasis awaiting within.



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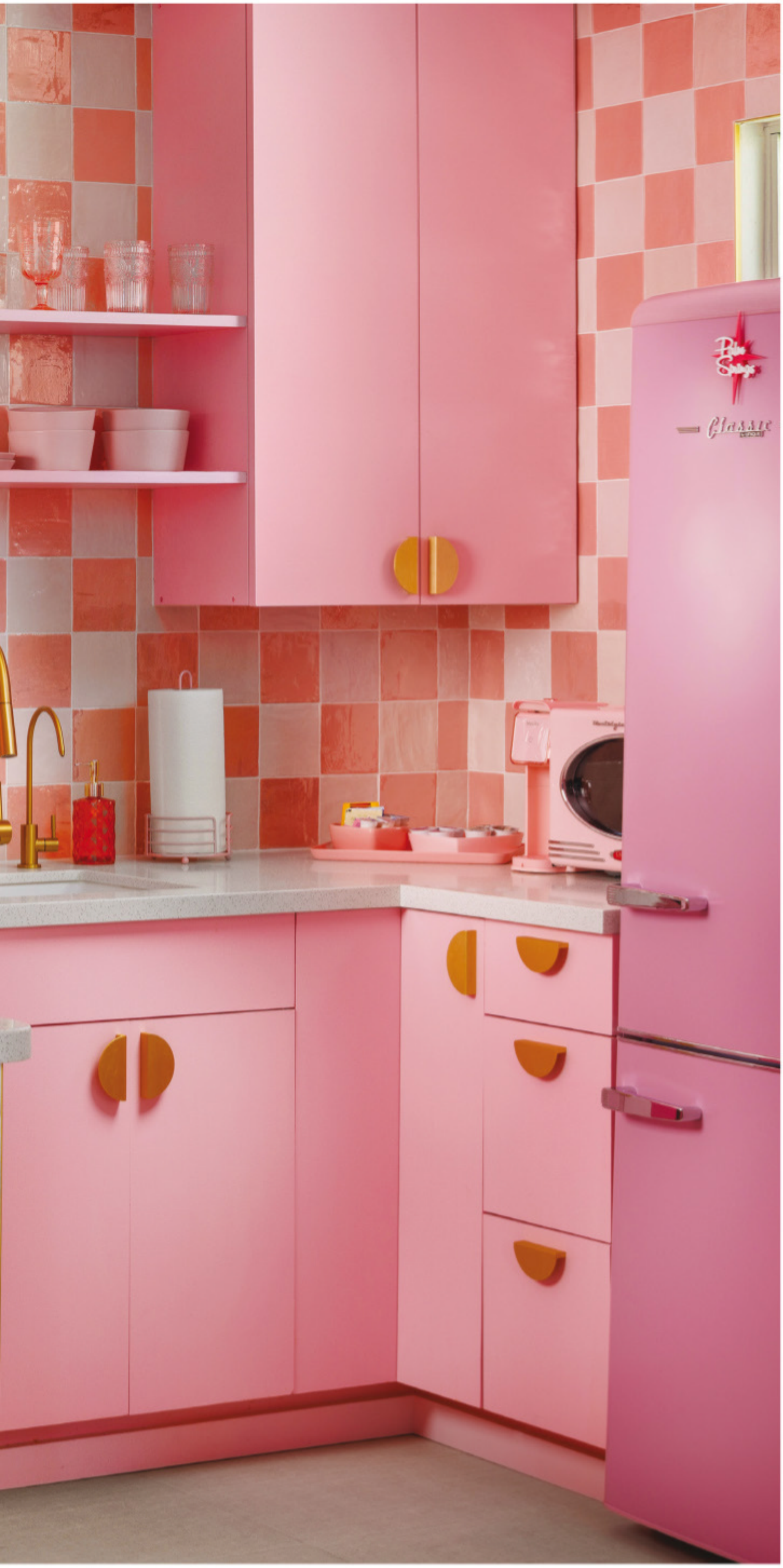
LET'S GO
GIRLS



Everything in the kitchen is pink even down to the dishwasher and small fridge. The couple wanted the classic checkerboard pattern in the kitchen but with a twist. They chose two different shades of baby pink tile in two different widths. “But our contractor somehow made it work, and we couldn’t be happier with the results,” says Fiona.

Everything in the condo comes dressed in pink, even down to the living room’s tile grout, soaring ceilings, and the dainty fridge tucked away in the kitchen. A troop of Flamingoes adorn the primary bedroom’s whimsical accent wall and pepper the pink patio in all their plastic lawn flamingo glory. And of course, there are numerous homages in the house to the girl who inspired it all: Barbie. Guests can even jam out to Aqua’s 1997 hit Barbie Girl, one of the records on rotation at the condo. Here, it’s truly a Barbie world.

HISTORIC MCM

The house is a short-term rental property dubbed Pink Paradise and designed by wife and husband creative duo, Fiona Burbank and Francesco Pollice. The pair owns a few other rental properties in the Palm Springs area, but none are as intriguing or as unforgettable as this Barbie-inspired vacation abode. Fiona and Francesco wanted a classic MCM style home to transform, so when the condo became available, the couple leapt at the chance to purchase it in 2023.

The house is historic and resides in The Ocotillo Lodge, a former luxury hotel on the East side of Palm Canyon, set beside the historic Twin Palms neighborhood—the famed Alexander Construction Company built both. The Lodge was known for its iconic keyhole-shaped swimming pool and forward-thinking architectural details (think, tongue-and-groove ceilings and walls of glass brick) making it a must-stay vacation stop for Hollywood elite and sun-seeking snowbirds alike. As if following this tradition of jaw dropping details, Fiona and Francesco opted for a dose of design choices that would render this rental feeling bold and beautiful, much like the Barbie doll who inspired this pink oasis in the desert.

Wicked
THE Geography OF LOST THINGS
TORI SPELLING

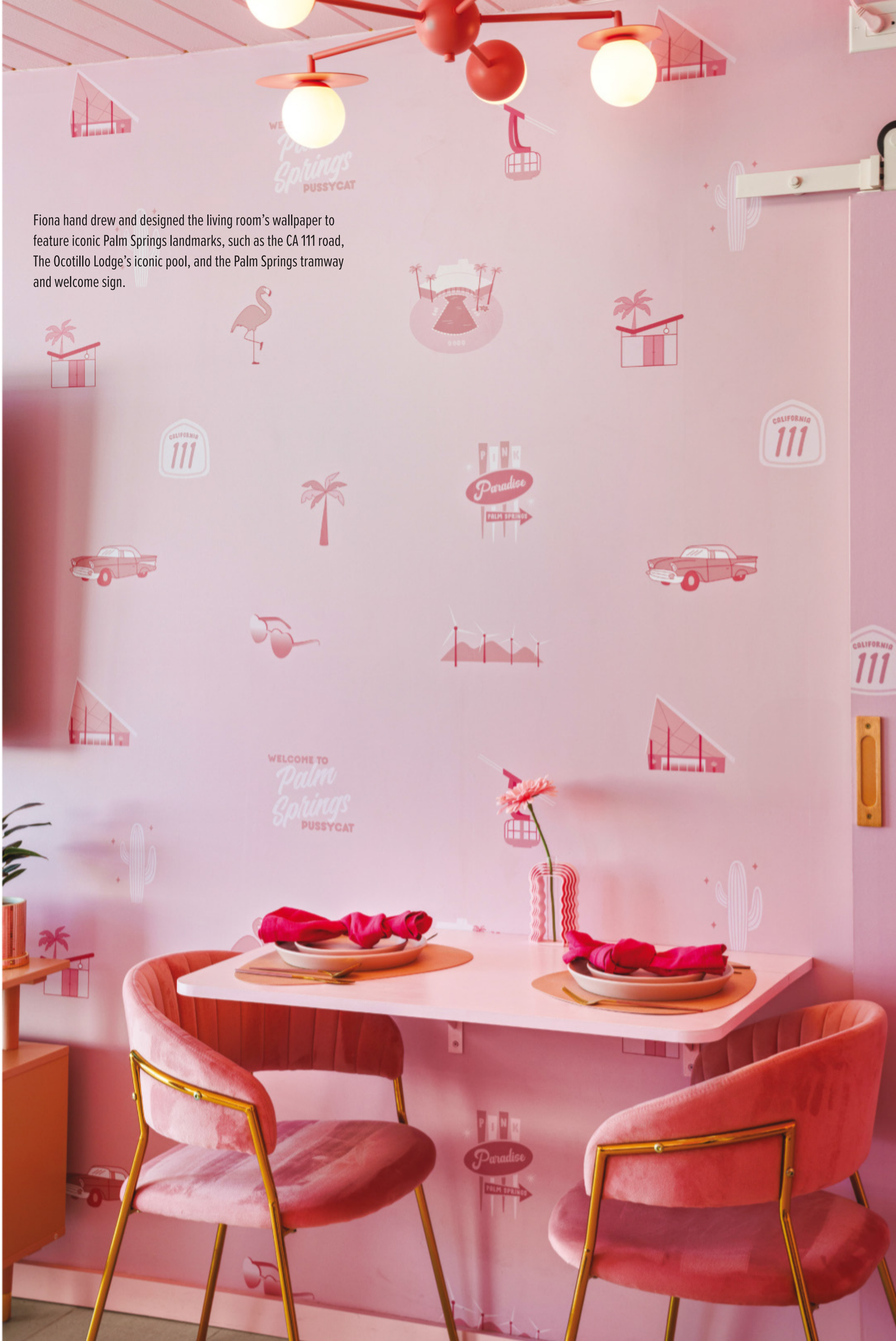
FENTIMANS
ROSE LEMONADE

top, left: The couple wanted open shelves to show off the backsplash in timeless shades of pink, plus the various pink dishware.
top, right: A faded pink pig serves as a sweet side table, where must-reads Fiona thought guests might enjoy cover the top in pops of magenta, emphasizing the collected, lived-in design the couple envisioned for their rental. The miniature feathered lamp gestures to the flamingo motif running throughout the house.
above: Diminutive pink champagne glasses and a bottle of pink rose lemonade stand at the ready for guests who vacation here.

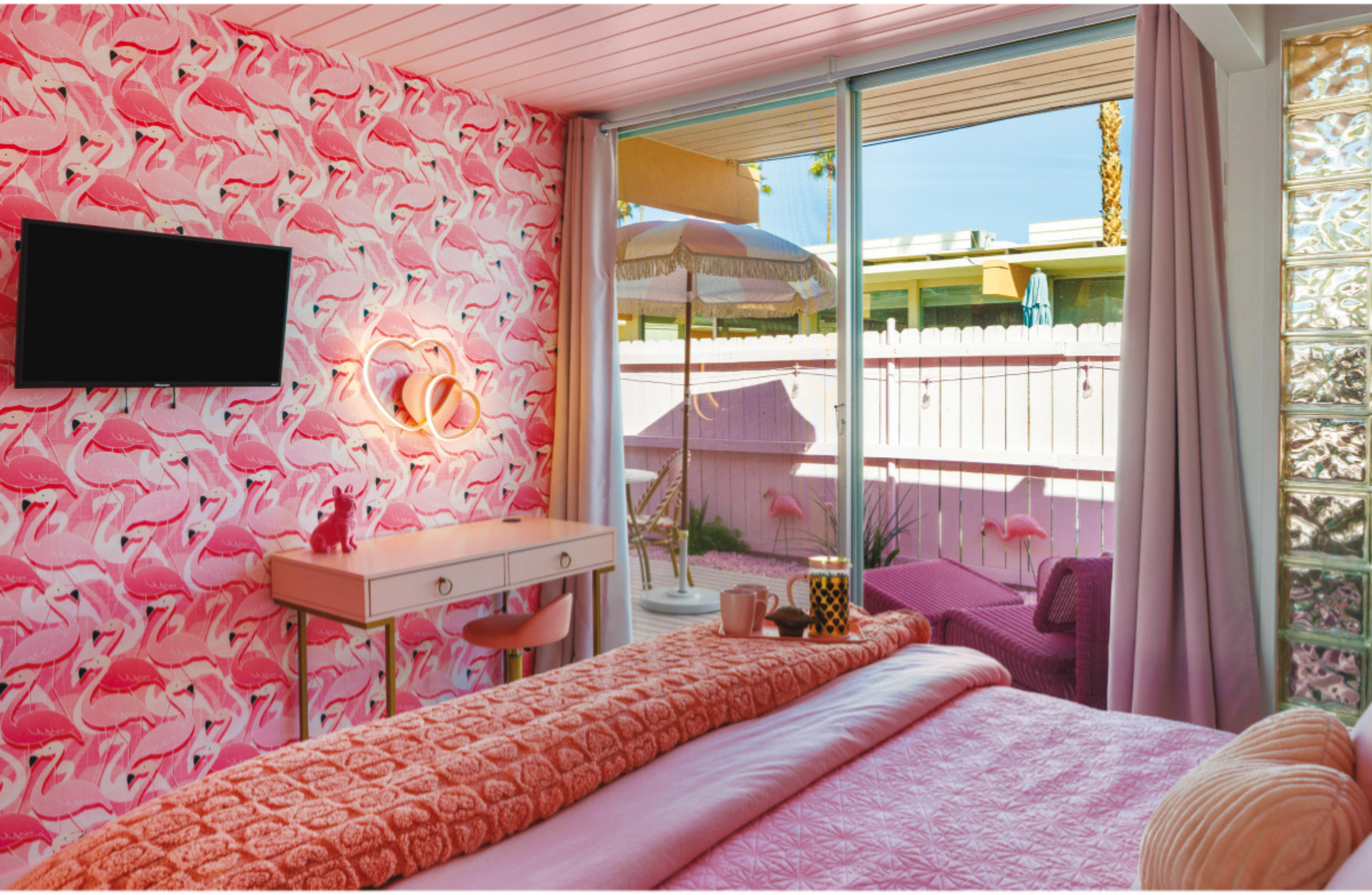
GIRLS TRIP

Yet, despite all its Barbie girl aesthetic, the home wasn't originally supposed to channel America's favorite girl doll. "Growing up, I used to love watching the Golden Girls," says Fiona. "And really, the inspiration behind the rental was me trying to answer the questions, 'what would it look like if the Golden Girls characters Rose and Blanche took a weekend trip to Palm Springs? Where would they stay?' It was Francesco who wanted to do it all in pink, and then the idea of making everything Barbie-inspired came along."

The condo weaves together references to Rose and Blanche—portraits of the besties take pride of place in the primary bedroom—with Barbie vibes infused throughout the house. "We have a few records in the condo, from Shania Twain's greatest hits to Madonna's Material Girl or Aqua's Barbie Girl on rotation," says Fiona. "We wanted the rental to feel like the perfect place to host a girls' trip—hence, the "Let's Go Girls" neon sign in the kitchen and pink rose lemonade available at the bar top."


WELCOME TO
Palm Springs
PUSSYCAT
CALIFORNIA
111
PINK
Paradise
PALM SPRINGS

Fiona hand drew and designed the living room's wallpaper to feature iconic Palm Springs landmarks, such as the CA 111 road, The Ocotillo Lodge's iconic pool, and the Palm Springs tramway and welcome sign.



A group of flamingoes is called a flamboyance. Fiona made sure that the primary bedroom—where she imagined Rose and Blanche staying—had a flamingo wallpapered accent wall. Sweethearts also cover the wall, gesturing to the love these two best friends had for each other.

Still, the rental is meant for everyone. “When you walk into this place, it forces you to smile,” says Fiona. The feedback Fiona and Francesco routinely get from husbands who’ve booked the rental for themselves and their wives always mention how the men liked the romantic color too and fell in love with the rental just as much as their spouses did. “The men probably don’t want to live in a pink paradise all the time, but temporarily it is fun for them too. Good design speaks to all people,” says Fiona.

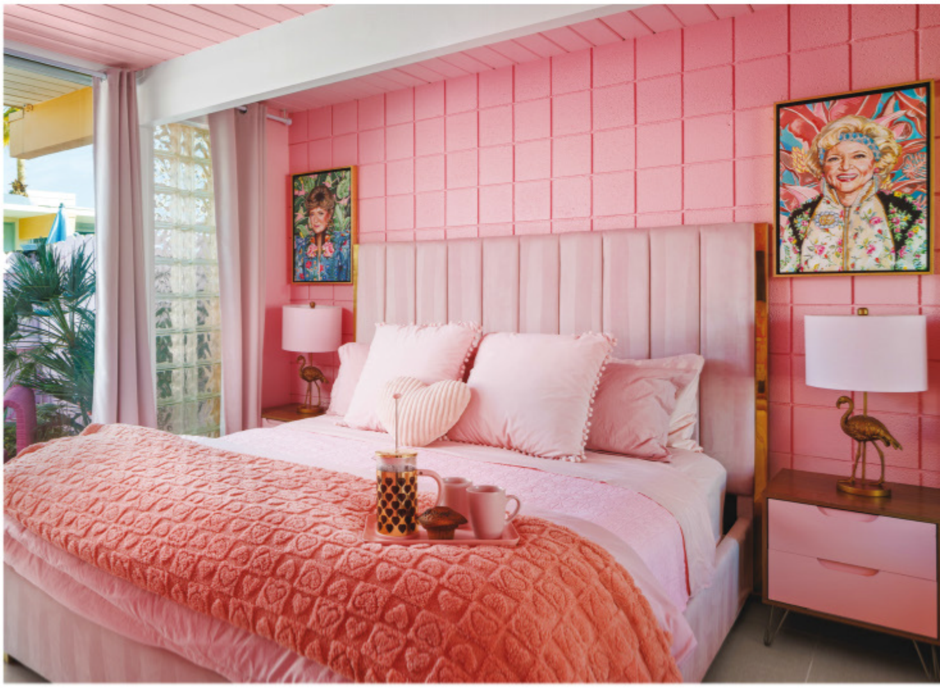
MAKE IT PINK

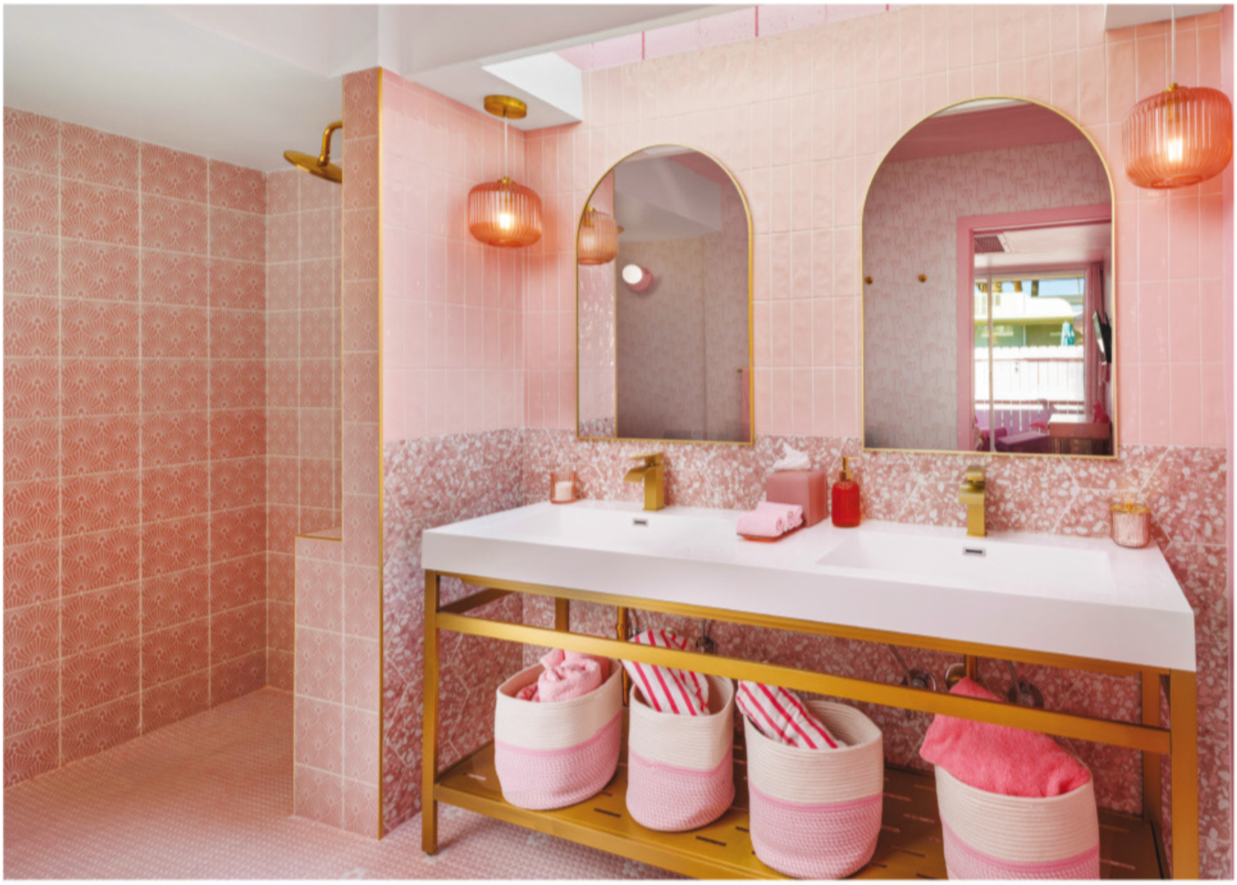
When the couple purchased the condo, all the rooms had pale-yellow accents here and there, but most everything was painted white with a dark green carpet for the floor. “It was like stepping into a blank space,” Fiona recalls, “The interiors weren’t as fun, and we knew we wanted to do the opposite.”

To get the designs just right, Fiona and Francesco often had to improvise. They wanted to make everything pink, even the tile grout in the living room. “No one made pink grout, so we made our own using clothing dye,” says Fiona. In the kitchen, the pair wanted a classic checkerboard pattern, but they chose two different pink tiles. They came in different widths, but their contractor managed to make it work. Outside in the patio, the pair first chose pink sand for the planters, but the color swiftly faded after a few weeks basking under the desert sun. “I bought white rocks and spray painted them pink,” says Fiona. “Every so often, I still go out there, spray can in hand and touch them up to keep the color bright.”

Their pursuit of all things pink continues. “We just added a miniature doggy pool in the patio and a small pink barbeque,” says Fiona. New plastic flamingo lawn ornaments are constantly added to the collection. “A group of flamingoes is called a flamboyance,” says Fiona. “We thought that went with the vibe of the home.” ⚛

Palm Springs





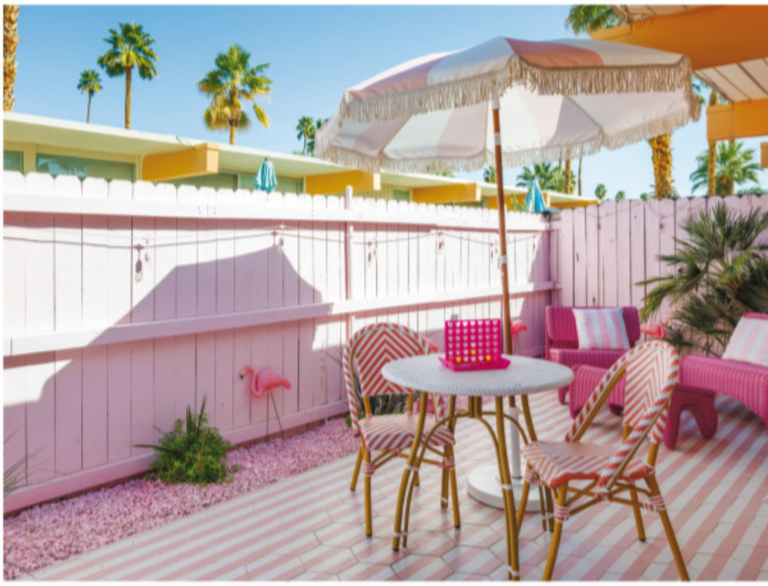
top, right: Fiona's favorite TV show growing up was The Golden Girls whose legendary characters Rose and Blanche became the Pink Paradise's essential muses. "But we wanted to update the women for modern times, so I found portraits of the girls in more modern clothing to hang in the primary bedroom," says Fiona.

above: Four different tiles, in several different shapes like square and penny sizes, were used in the primary bathroom, keeping the room's overall soft pastel pink shade feeling energetic. Touches of a simple white hue in the tile grout and sink top, along with the crisp white ceiling, helps temper and balance out the saturated pink color. Helping flood the room with more natural light, Fiona and Francesco removed a fluorescent light that had been covering up the skylight above the sink.

HOW TO DECORATE WITH JUST ONE HUE

Keep your decor looking dynamic even if it's all from the same color family.

- **Embrace different textures.** Fiona and Francesco opted for different materials whenever possible, from a pink velvet couch to pink tile with a glossy finish. "Don't be afraid to lean into different textures. It will make the space feel more alive and less static when decorating in the same color," she says.
- **Choose a color that makes you happy.** "We knew we didn't want beige or Millennial gray," says Fiona. "Neither of us pumped the brakes, because we wanted this to be a fun spot. If your home is loved by everyone, then you might be doing something wrong. Good color choices should speak to you and evoke an emotional reaction."
- **Don't stick with the exact same tone.** Fiona didn't want her color selection to feel monotonous, so she peppered dramatic magenta and playful fuchsia shades, along with sweet bubblegum pinks and rosy hues for a dynamic look that feels ever evolving.



above, right: The couple added white and pink tiles to the patio to help extend the small condo's living space, creating the classic indoor to outdoor living aesthetic heralded by traditional MCM design.
above, left: The couple wanted the condo to feel fun for guests. Hence, the connect four, patio furniture, and decorative pink lawn flamingos in the condo's patio perfect for outdoor entertaining.
opposite: The pink patio offers a sublime view of the San Jacinto Mountains, one of the original selling points that drew the couple to the home.

SurfPrep
MOORE'S REFINISHING
RIDGID

RESTORING HERITAGE

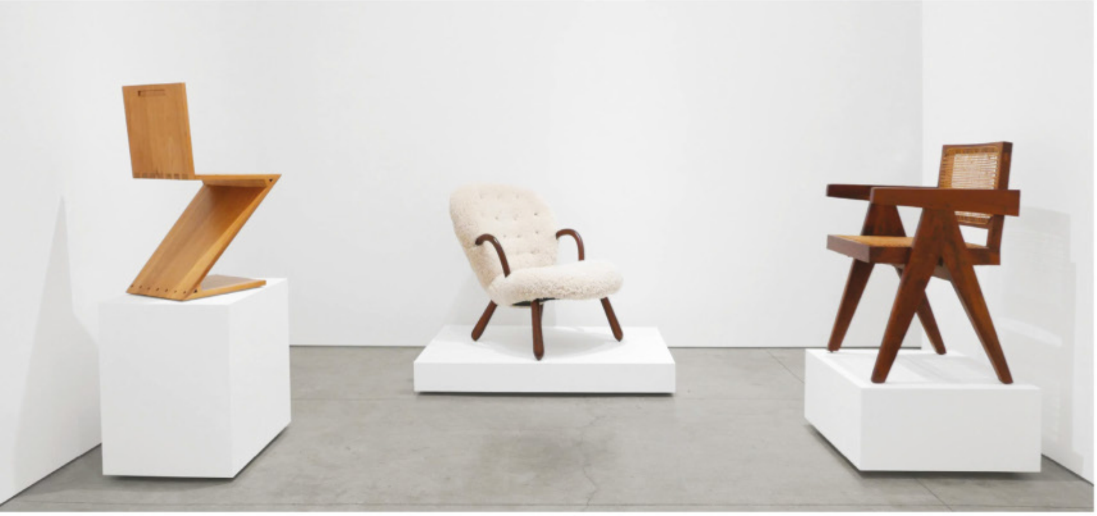
How a furniture refinisher and restoration artist is preserving history one piece of furniture at a time.

By **Michelle Mastro** • Photography by **Ron A. DeAngelis**

REVIVE AND REFINE
REVIVE AND REFINE
REVIVE AND REFINE
REVIVE AND REFINE

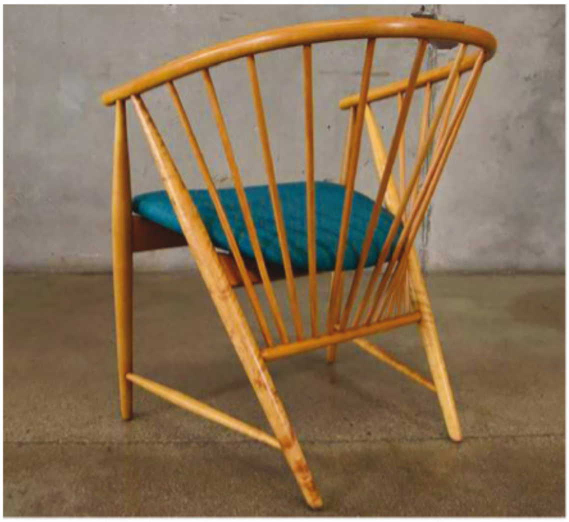
EVER READ ABOUT an Eichler or Wexler home renovation and wonder about all the pristine Mid-century Modern furniture in the home? If so, you're not alone. "There's a lot of work that goes into this furniture just like in the home themselves," Aaron Moore, restoration artisan and owner of Moore's Refinishing in Garden Grove, California, explains. Aaron restores and preserves all types of furniture, but over his 21 years in the business he has specialized in a lot of MCM furniture. In fact, many of his customers over the years have made the cover of *Atomic Ranch* print issues for their beautiful home renovations, which wouldn't be complete without the MCM furniture Aaron carefully brings back to life, one part at a time.

top, right: Aaron's book, *Revive & Refine: The Art of Furniture Restoration*, sits atop a Grotrian Steinweg piano. Aaron first entered the industry of refinishing furniture by breathing new life into old and worn-down pianos at a friend's workshop.
top, left: An Eames speaker, an item Aaron restored, sits on display at the Peter Blake Gallery.
left: An MCM bench Aaron helped restore sits inside Philmer J. Ellerbroek's home in Tustin, which appeared in a print issue of Atomic Ranch.
opposite: Aaron stands in his workshop in Garden Grove, California. Behind him is a wall of specialty clamps used in master refinishing to hold furniture in place as they are carefully restored.



left: Restorations that Aaron did for the Blakehaus Show for Peter Blake in Laguna Beach. A Pierre Jeanneret chair on the right, Philip Arctander Clam Chair in center and a Gerrit Rietveld Zig-Zag Chair on the left.

below, right: A restoration artisan, as opposed to a novice refinisher, Aaron gingerly takes apart his project components to preserve as much of the original as possible.



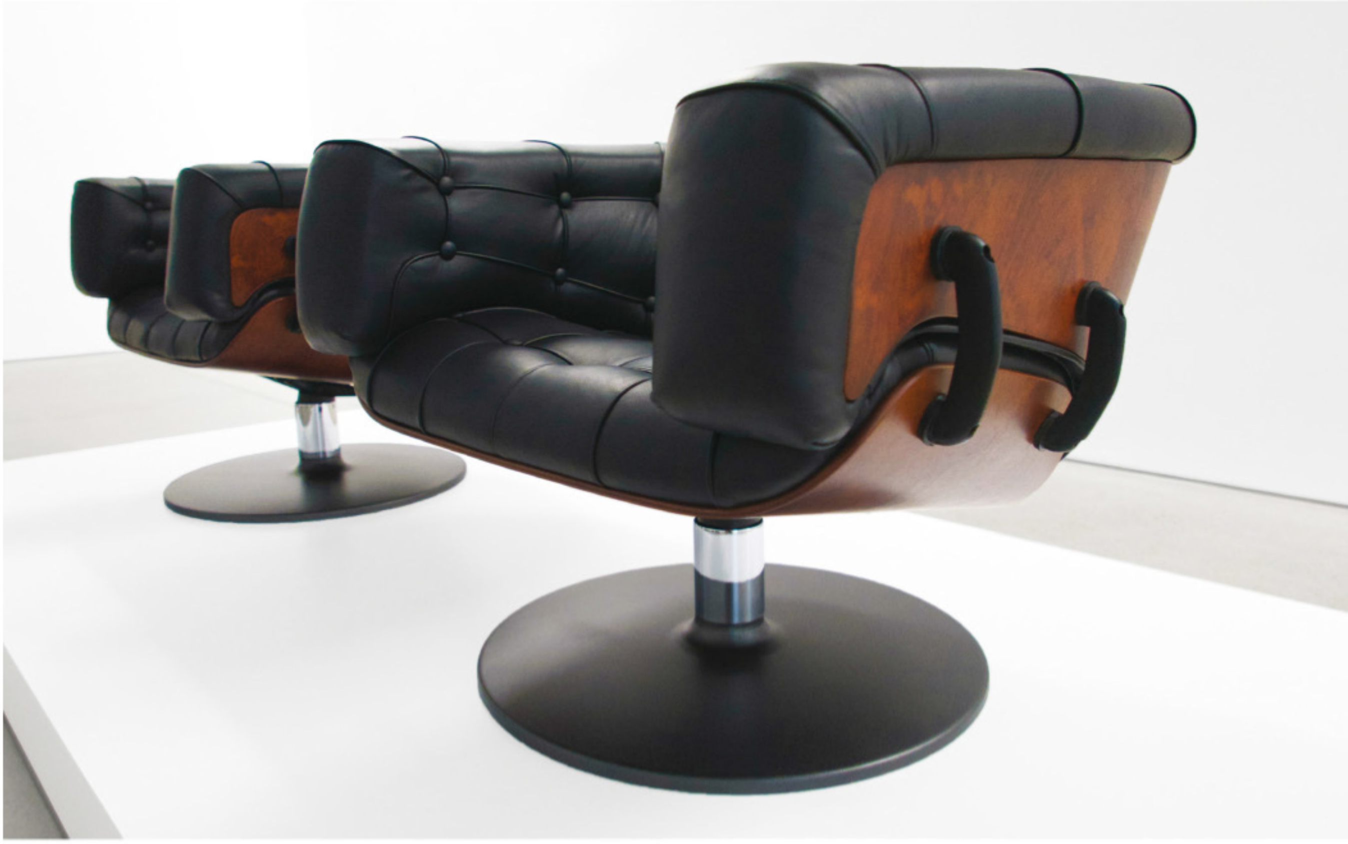
above, left: Aaron restored this Sonna Rosen Sun Feather chair for Kevin Tittle Design.

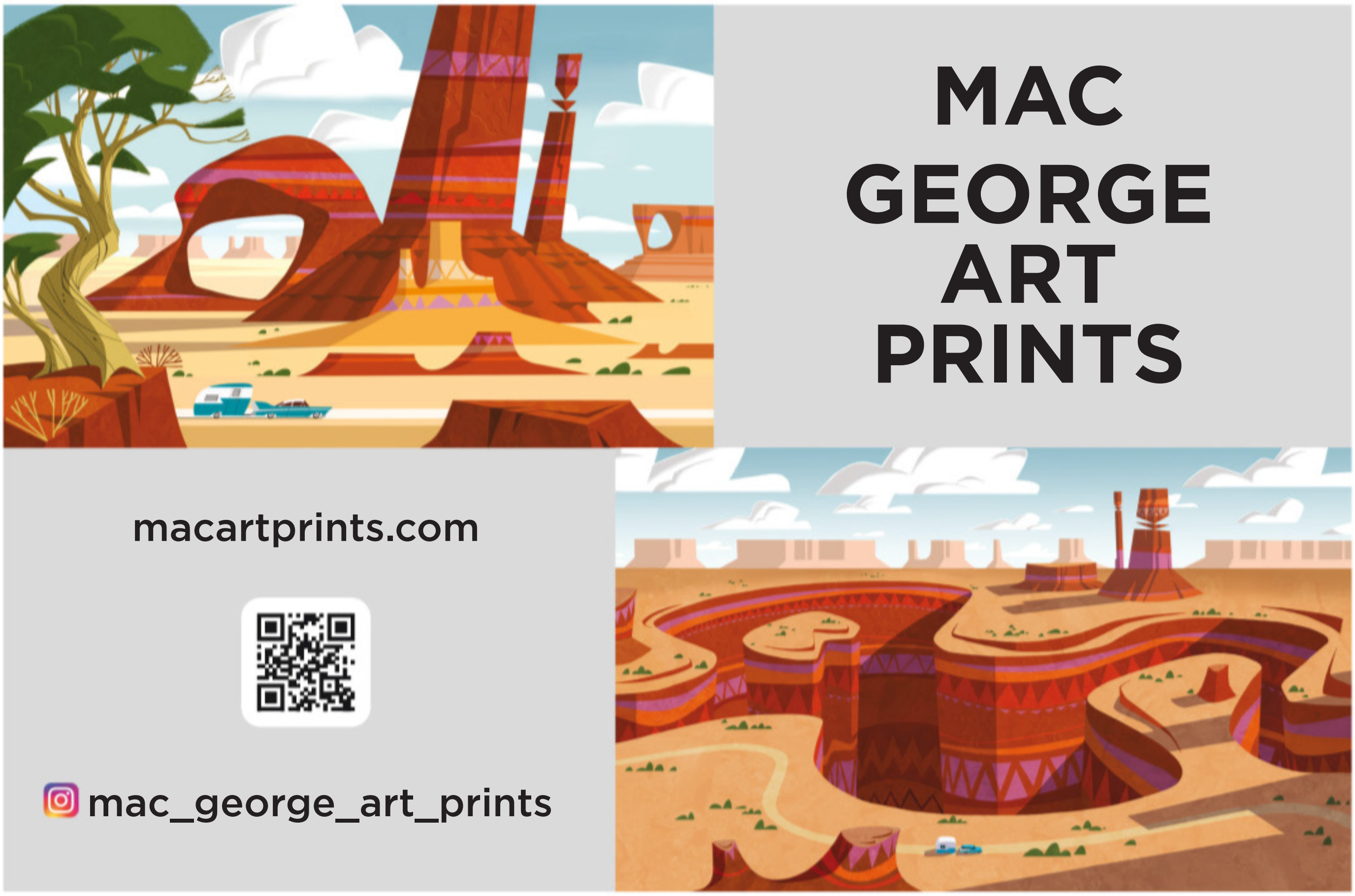
below: Aaron holds his book opened to pages of himself restoring Arne Vodder pieces for the brand Fritz Hansen.

Pieces by Hans Wegner or Henry Wakefield are no strangers to Aaron's bustling workshop, full to the brim with Mid Mod wonders, Grotrian-Steinweg pianos, and other high-profile pieces like his most expensive project so far, a rare Antoine Philippon and Jacqueline Lecoq wall unit valued at $175,000 and requested by Laguna Beach gallery owners.

However, perhaps one of his greatest passions is teaching others how to refinish furniture the right way. What began as social media videos and posts eventually grew into a beautiful coffee table book, "Revive and Refine: The Art of Furniture Restoration," a 240-page starter guide for would-be refinishers that covers everything from how to disassemble pieces and properly care for hardware to how to price refinished items to sell. "We thought of the book as a complete guide with the whole step by step process for everyone just starting out," he says. He even passed on early drafts to his wife to help remove any jargon to make the book truly approachable for newbies interested in his craft.

Aaron helped restore these Martin Grierson London chairs for the Peter Blake Gallery.





MAC GEORGE ART PRINTS

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NO SMOKING BEYOND THIS POINT
NO SMOKING

opposite: Aaron carefully restored a Serigo Rodrigues rosewood bench from Brazil. A restoration artisan, as opposed to a novice refinisher, Aaron gingerly takes apart the piece to preserve as much of the original as possible.

Since the Covid Pandemic, flipping, salvaging, and rehabbing furniture has been a growing trend. But not all novice refinishers, like those hastily repainting or varnishing furniture to flip at flea markets, know what they are doing, says Aaron. In cases like these, the furniture could lose not only its beauty but also its overall value.

Hence, Aaron sees such a guidebook as essential because there is no formal entry into refinishing. Early on in his career, Aaron learned his trade through an apprenticeship, as most entering the industry do, and before that, he'd been a woodshop prodigy in high school, creating chairs and tables for teachers and friends. Upon graduation, he got his professional start refinishing pianos at a company in Anaheim run by a friend's dad.

Passing on his skills to others became even more necessary after a significant health scare in 2022. At 36, Aaron had three small heart attacks that would have culminated in what his doctor termed "the widow maker," a 99 percent blockage in a major coronary artery that would have proven lethal had he not had a stint placed. "My wife was 8 months pregnant at the time, and I just kept thinking, 'how am I going to be here for my family?'"

The entire experience had Aaron reevaluating what was important to him and his life's purpose. "What would happen with the knowledge I have? All the guys I learned from have already passed, and there's always been an element of gatekeeping to this trade—because many refinishers used to see each other as competition."

Post heart attack, Aaron started making videos on YouTube and has even led online courses in which he teaches the next generation of master refinishers. His book has sold 500 copies within the first year, and he is continually ordering more to meet reader demand. "A goal of mine is teaching others the way we artisan refinishers work, the process and techniques not known to the general public," he says.

For Aaron and his students, older furniture is built better, with thicker longer-lasting veneers and zero plastic—all of which makes saving classic furniture pieces vital to lovers of Mid Mod material culture. "There's even the character of the wood to consider. The walnut wood from the 60s and 70s has character and depth, whereas most walnut trees grown today are cut down before they've had a chance to reach maturity and lack these traits," he says. "Most times, older furniture is just better." ⚛

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ROADSIDE REVIVAL

Renovated motels and motor lodges are a trend that not only provide some of today's super stylish stays, they also rescued a major part of American Mid Century History.

By **Jickie Torres**

MID CENTURY MODERN LOVERS know one thing that the average person might not have come to appreciate yet on a wide scale, and it's that American motels are cool. Born on a California roadway, the first motel—smack dab in between Los Angeles and San Francisco in a small beach town called San Luis Obispo—was built in 1925 and was designed by Arthur Heineman. He wanted to call it the Milestone Motor Hotel but at 19 letters, it was too long for the roofline it was intended to crown so he shortened it to Mo-Tel. And from there the growth of the modern-day motel mirrored the trajectory of the our own county's growth. Auto tourism was emerging and after WWII it boomed with a growing middle class and a developing highway system.

The Cuyama Buckthorn in New Cuyama, California rose up in the 1950s complete with a restaurant and saloon thanks to the area's booming oil trade. The new owners of the 21-room hotel originally designed by architect George Vernon Russel embraced this cowboy town aesthetic in their renovations.
Photo courtesy of Cuyama Buckthorn

CUYAMA
BUCKHORN
OPEN

above: The Nevada Hotel in York, Maine. This hotel overlooking Long Sands Beach opened in 1951 and was one of the first motor hotels in the state. Photo by Reel Maine Company.

below: The Starlight Motor Inn in North Charleston, South Carolina first opened in 1961. It sat vacant for 15 years and was about to be demolished until local friends Ham Morrison and Walker Lamond bought it. Photo by Lizzy Rollins.

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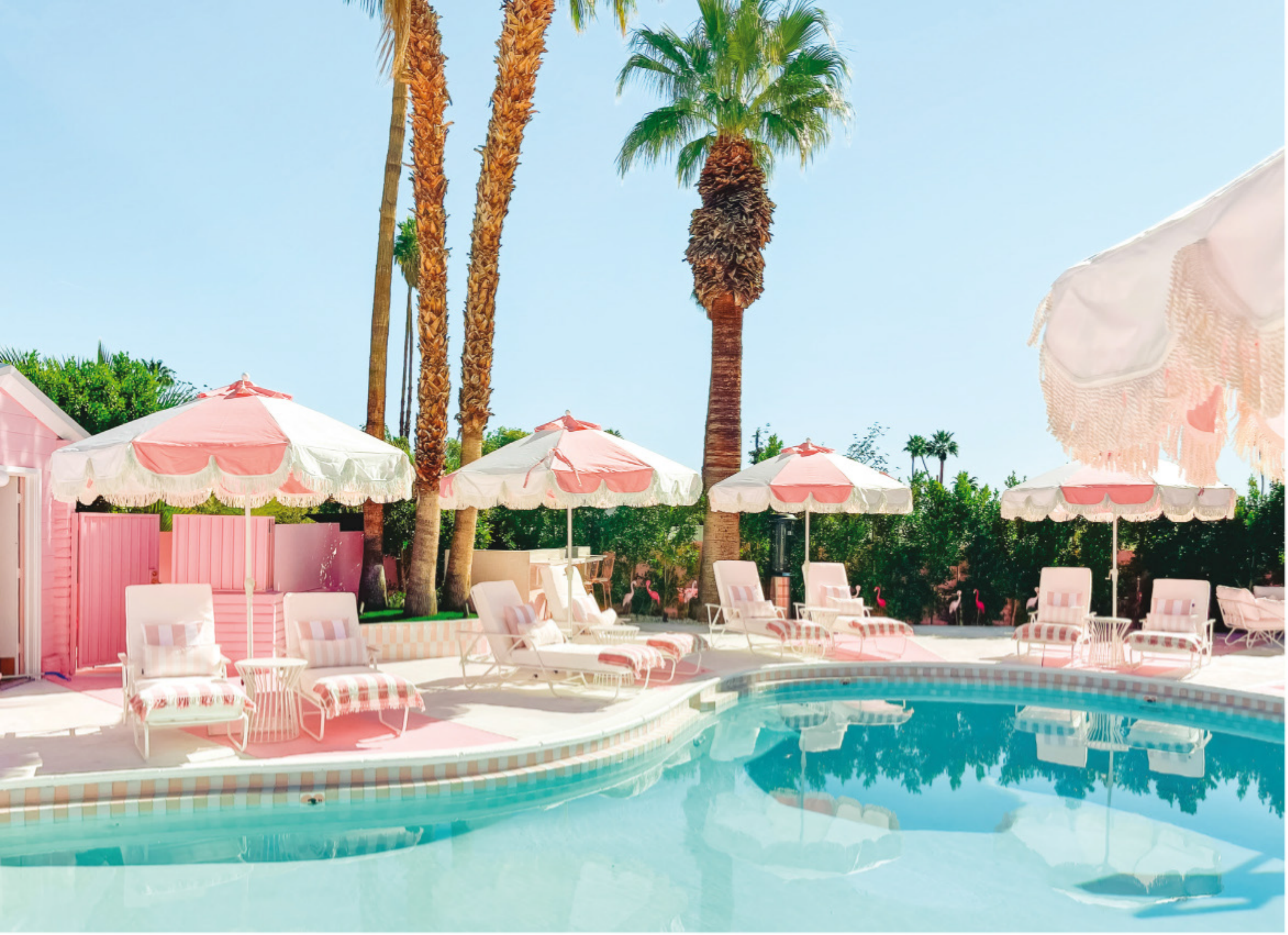

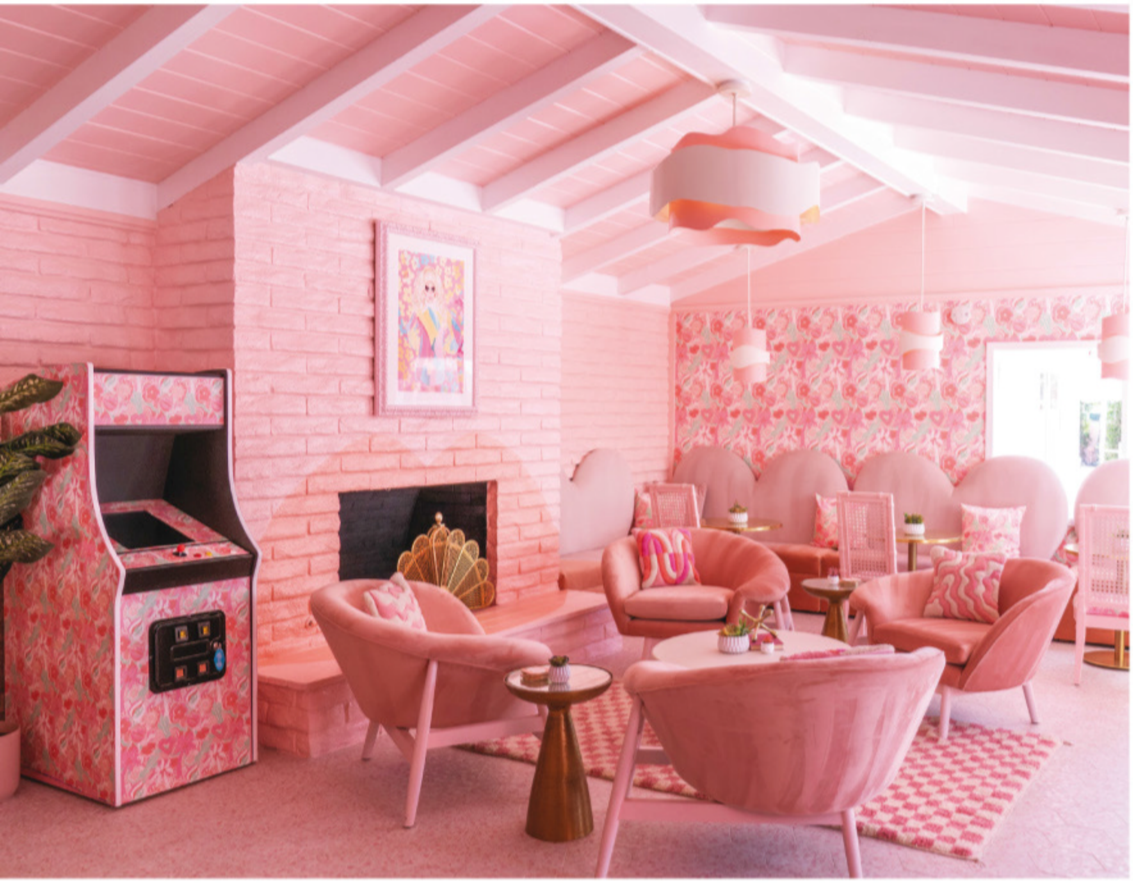

this page: The Trixie Motel in Palm Springs, California was renovated by drag star Trixie Mattel. It was originally built in 1952 as the Coral Sands Inn. located in the Old Las Palmas neighborhood it was always a pink kitschy motel and it was popular with celebrities like Elvis and Liberace. Trxie renovated it with designer Dani Dazey in 2022 embracing the campy aesthetic. Photo courtesy of Trixe Motel.

MOTEL
VACANCY
Nomada
HEATED POOL

top: The Skyview in Los Alamos, California was built in 1959 and was rumored to host the likes of The Beatles, and The Mamas & the Papas thanks to it's location as the halfway point from Los Angeles to San Fransisco. Photo courtesy of Nomada Hotel Group.

above: The Ace Hotel & Swim Club in Palm Springs is famous now for chic earthy feel and year-round pool party vibe. But when it was built in 1965 it was a Howard Johnson motel with an attached Denny's coffee shop. Photo by Stephen Kent/ OTTO.

Style, Durability and Security

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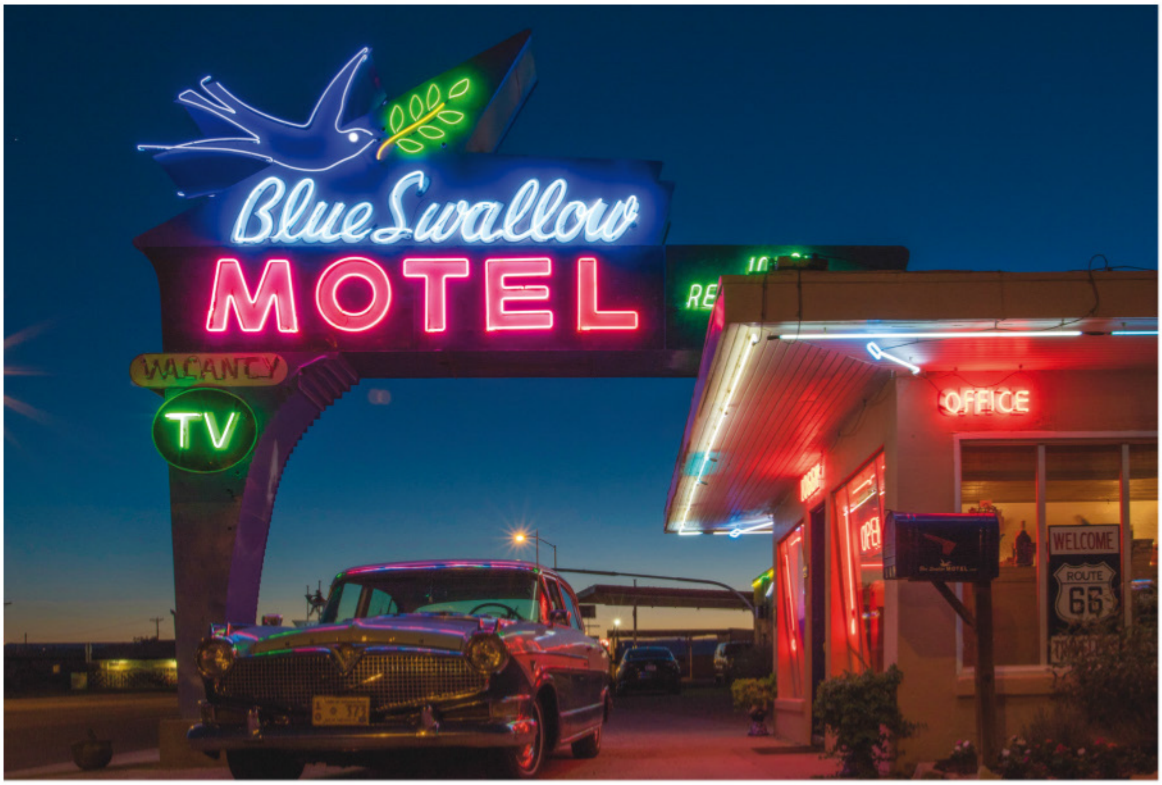
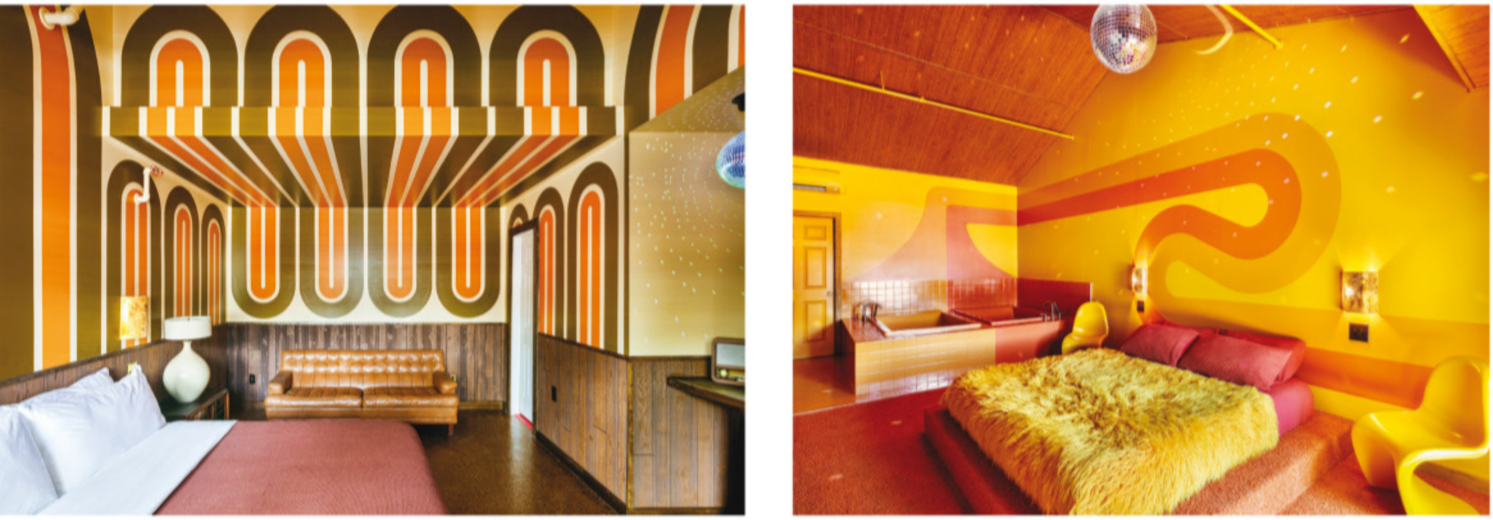




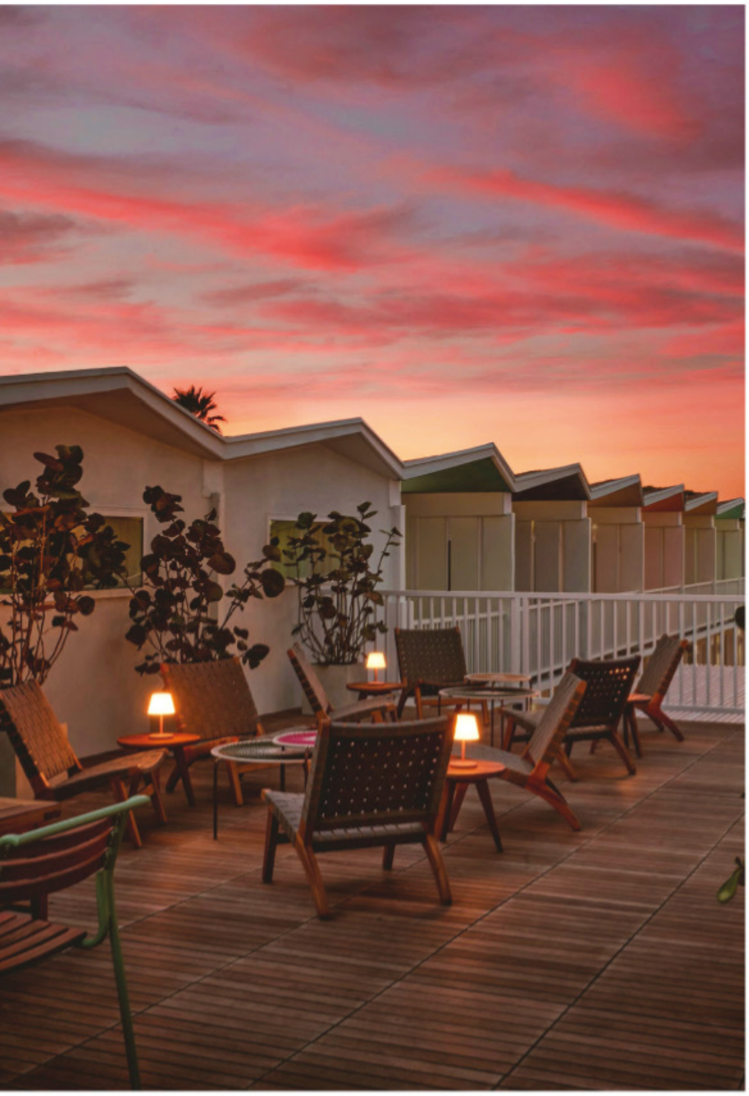
top: The Blue Swallow Motel in Tucumcari, New Mexico is one of the best preserved and longest continuously operating independently owned and family-run motels on all of Route 66. It was built in 1939 and its coffee shop was added in 1941. Photo courtesy of the Blue Swallow Motel.

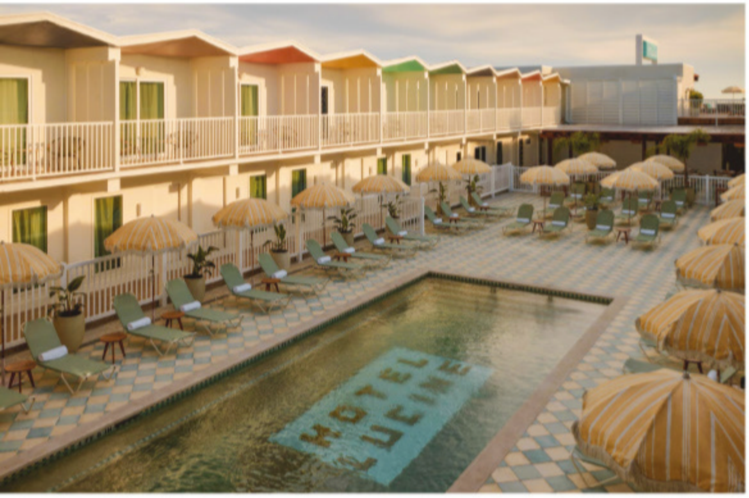
above: The Dive in Nashville Tennessee is said to have hosted Johnny Cash, Hank Williams and Dolly Parton when it opened in 1956 as the Key Motel. When the new owners bought and renovated it in 2019 they leaned into a retro maximalist 70s vibe. Photos by Ben Fitchett.

The enormous demand for convenient roadside lodging produced upwards of 60,000 motels by the mid 1960s. Of course during the 1980s, resort style stays and major hotel chains began to dominate the travel and accommodation industry but vintage motels have had a renaissance. They've been transformed into some of the hippest and chicest stays offering the charm of a boutique hotel and the style of a bespoke resort.

British author Ellie Seymore has been charmed by them and the ever changing reputation these roadside motels have endured. In her new book *Vintage Motels: America's Most Iconic Motels, Beautifully Restored,* she offers a unique perspective on the classic American motel and catalogs some of the most remarkable ones today.

"Growing up in England, my only references were of them as seedy dives I'd seen on screen in three of my favourite films, Alfred Hitchcock's 1960 classic Psycho, Ridley Scott's 1991 Thelma & Louise, and Quentin Tarantino's 1994 Pulp Fiction, and more recently 2015 TV comedy series, Schitt's Creek," she writes.





this page: The Hotel Lucine in Galveston, Texas began its life in 1963 designed by architects Benjamin Joseph Kotin and Tibor Beerman as the Treasure Isle motel. They even ran their architecture practice out of it. Photos by Johanna Andruchovic.

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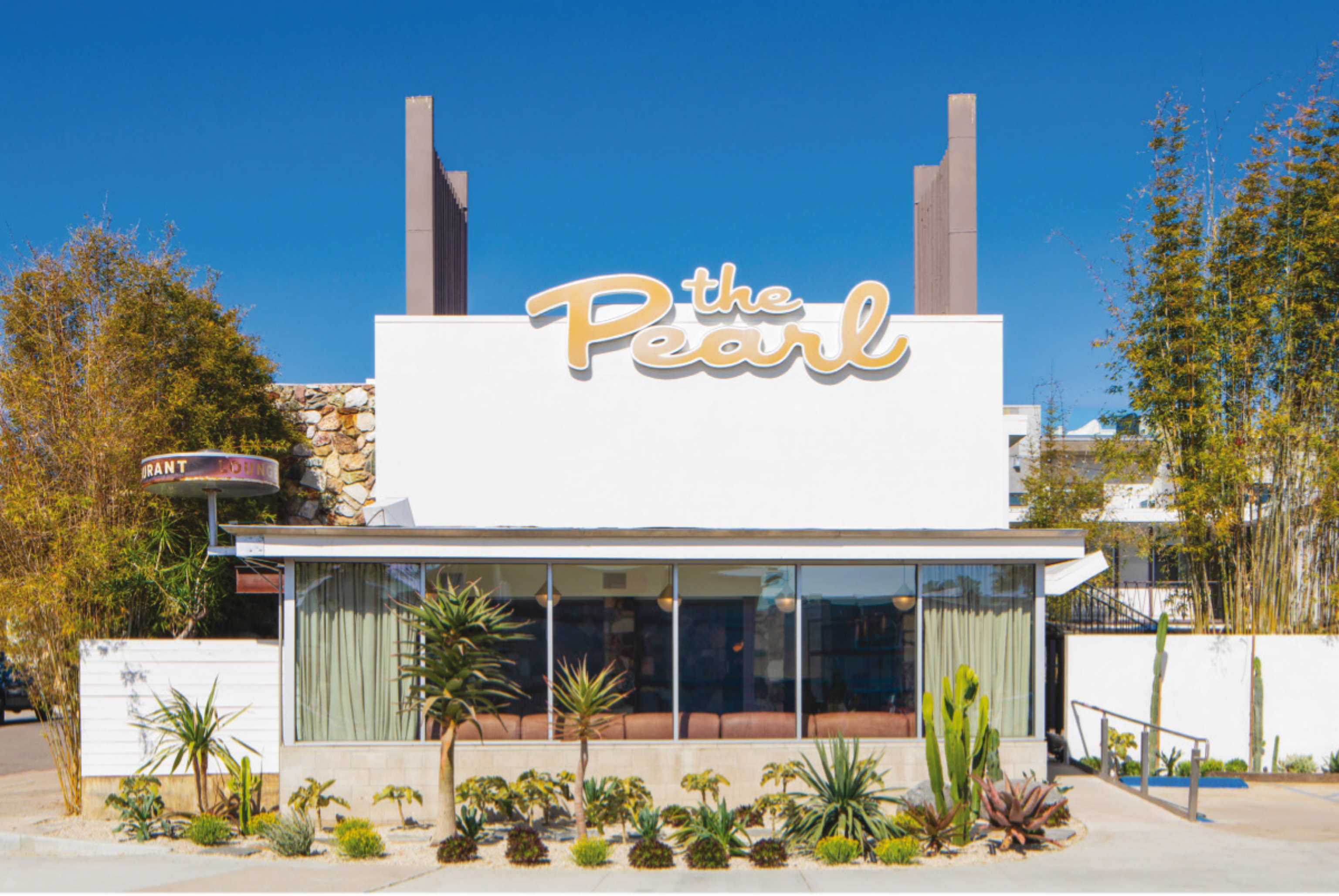

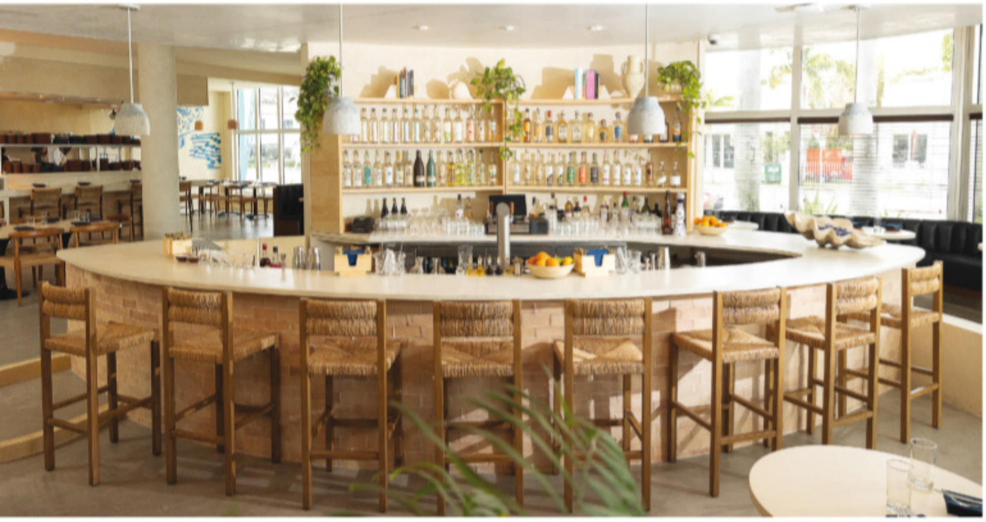

above: The Pearl in Point Loma, California was originally designed in 1959 by local architect Robert Platt complete with an oyster-shaped pool. Photo courtesy of The Pearl.

left: The Vagabond in Miami, Florida rises up in full MiMo (Miamo Modern) style amid the strip's Art Deco hotels built in 1953 and designed by architect Barnet Robert Swartburg who also designed the Delano Hotel. Photo courtesy of The Vagabond.

"They fascinated me as much for their edginess as they did as symbols of freedom and anonymity, but mostly for their wood-paneled interiors and buzzing neon signs; so much cooler than the average chintzy British bed and breakfast."

She spotlights 40 of the nations most noteworthy motels and covers the entire country from The Pacific Coast Highway and Route 66 to the corners of the Catskills down the Deep South. The diversity not only highlights how each historic location is a jewel box ripe for reinterpretation, it also proves some of the best locations stay the best.

Vintage Motels

Vintage Motels by Ellie Seymore, published by Luster Publishing © 2025; en.lusterpublishing.com.

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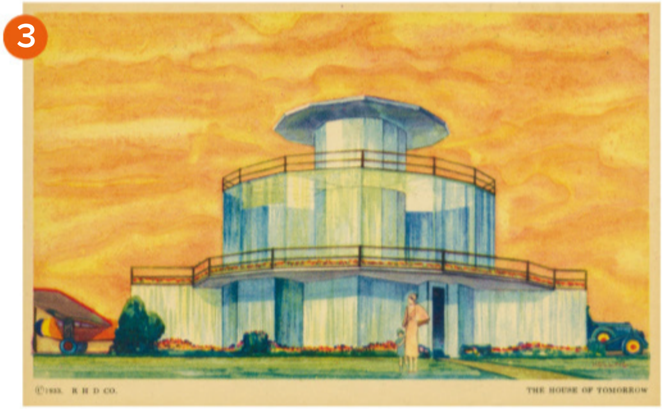

4

1. Inside Post & Beam
Post and beam architecture is a style of construction that shows off wooden beams and framing on both the interior or exterior of the home. Dive deeper into this method that achieves a one-of-a-kind look. Photo by Jim Brown

2. A Haven of Tranquility
Cuadra San Cristóbal, a famous estate designed by Luis Barragán and Andrés Casillas features bright pink walls and incorporates elements of traditional haciendas and ranches, but expresses those themes through modern forms. Photo by Šarūnas Burdulis

3. Mid West Modernizers
Keck & Keck's achievements were impressive and groundbreaking, yet they are "underknown" innovators of Mid Century Modern architecture. Like Frank Lloyd Wright and Mies van der Rohe, the brother-run Architectural firm were early pioneers. Read on to discover their work with passive energy and open floor plans. Photo by Steve Shook

4. Primary Style
Bring your favorite room to life with these MCM products in primary colors, the essential building blocks of color.

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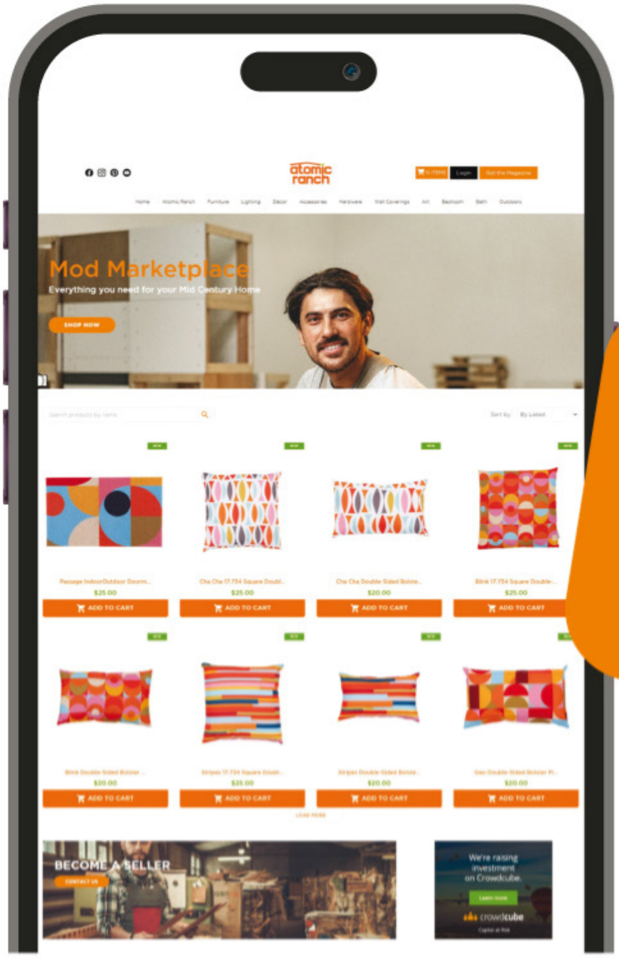
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/ RESOURCES /

EAT-IN KITCHEN RECIPE

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Designer: Kathleen Glossa, founder, Swivel Interiors, swivelinteriors.com, email: kathleen@swivelinteriors.com, Instagram @swivelinteriors, 206-412-3542.

Photos: Andrew Giammarco, contact for usage permissions: contact@andrewgiammarco.com, 917-273-6126.

General contractor: Stuart Feldt, W.S. Feldt, wsfeldt.com, stuart@wsfeldt.com, 206-321-0694

Artwork: Michael Doyle, michaeldoylestudio.com.

Cabinets: Lisa Day, Space Theory, spacetheory.com, lisa@spacetheory.com, 206-454-3160

Countertops: Dekton Zenith, cosentino.com/usa/dekton

Pendant light: Schoolhouse Electric Co. in model Ray in Dune finish, schoolhouse.com.

Dishware: Heath Ceramics, heathceramics.com.

Chairs: DWR Salt Chair, dwr.com.

Stools: secondhand

GEORGIA ON MY MIND

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For more on Jessica, visit copperskyrenovations.com.

Stylist: Elissa Benzie. Visit elissabenziestyle.com.

Dining area artwork: Annie King. Visit anniekingart.com.

Dining area chandelier, front porch sconces: Original to the home.

Kitchen & Mudroom cabinetry: Custom cabinetry in Maple by Dove Studios. Visit dovestudios.com.

Kitchen appliance pulls: Allenglade Appliance Pulls in Aged Brass by Rejuvenation. Visit rejuvenation.com.

Kitchen backsplash tile: Scalene Triangle in Palm Tree by Fireclay Tile. Visit fireclaytile.com.

Kitchen ceiling flush mount lights: Cadbury Flush Mount 8" in Brass with ochre shade by Dutton & Brown. Visit duttonbrown.com.

Kitchen knobs: Midcentury Peg Knob in Aged Brass by Rejuvenation. Visit rejuvenation.com.

Kitchen pulls: Boomerang Pull in Aged Brass by Rejuvenation. Visit rejuvenation.com.

Lounge ceiling fixture: Illusion Pendant with Oval Glass Shade in Aged Brass by Perigold. Visit perigold.com.

Lounge/fireplace artwork: Chris Brandell. Visit chrisbrandell.com.

Mudroom/Pantry artwork: Ellen Rolli. Visit ellenrolli.com.

Mudroom/Pantry ceiling spotlights: Stanly Spot Light in Aged Brass by Dainolite. Visit dainolite.ca.

Mudroom/Pantry floor: Terrazzo Tile in Multi by Riad Tile. Visit riadtile.com.

Mudroom/Pantry knobs: Round Cabinet Knobs in Light Pink by Etsy vendor. Visit etsy.com.

Mudroom/Pantry pendant: Vintage pendant by City Issue. Visit cityissue.com.

Mudroom/Pantry pulls: Cabinet Pulls in "A" Brushed Brass by NancyHardware (Etsy). Visit etsy.com/shop/NancyHardware.

Mudroom/Pantry sconces: Cora Wall Sconce in Aged Brass by Mitzi. Visit mitzilighting.com.

Paint: Front door: Rachel Pink; mudroom slat wall: Oakmoss; primary bedroom: Taiga; ceiling beams: Pure White. Sherwin-Williams. Visit sherwin-williams.com.

Primary bathroom floor: Terrazzo Marble Floor Tile in Agglo Vendo by NASCO. Visit nascostonetile.com.

Primary bathroom shower wall: Grace O tile in Sage Gloss by Traditions in Tile. Visit traditionsintile.com.

Primary bathroom shower wall grout: Starlike Evo Epoxy Grout in Verde Pino by Traditions in Tile. Visit traditionsintile.com.

Primary bathroom vanity: Custom vanity by West Coast Modern LA. Visit westcoastmodernla.com.

Primary bathroom vanity mirrors: Streamline Rounded Mirror in Antique Brass by West Elm. Visit westelm.com.

Primary bathroom vanity pendants: Luna Cord Pendant with 6" Shade in Natural Brass with opal shade by Schoolhouse. Visit schoolhouse.com

Primary bedroom fan: Aviation 3 Blade 60" fan by MinkaAire. Visit minkaire.com.

Rugs: Sullivan Fine Rugs. Visit sulliva

TREASURE HUNTERS

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Follow Mark Mitchell on Instagram @StradaVeloce and on Facebook at /MarkMitchell.

Paint: Interior: Dunn-Edwards in Warm White, dunnedwards.com. Exterior: Behr in Hailstorm Gray, behr.com. Trim: Behr in Imperial Gray, behr.com.

Wall oven/microwave combo: Bosch, bosch-home.com.

Stainless refrigerator: Summit Appliance, summitappliance.com.

Induction cooktop: Fisher & Paykel, fisherpaykel.com.

Dishwasher: LG, lg.com.

Kitchen cabinets with stainless doors: Ikea, ikea.com.

Tile flooring: Corso Italia Porcelain in Trama Gray, 12x24, corsoitalia.com.

Bathroom fixtures, hardware: Kohler, kohler.com.

Mosaic bathroom tile: American Olean Unglazed ColorBody Mosaic 1x1 blends, americanolean.com.

Primary bathroom tile: American Olean in Snow Leopard, americanolean.com.

Guest bathroom tile: American Olean in Totally Neutral, americanolean.com.

Bathroom custom glass, mirrors: Palace Glass and Door, gmwindowsglassdoor.com.

Exterior pinhole double-cone sconces, Remcraft double-bullet lights: Practical Props, shop.practicalprops.com.

General contractor: MJ Remodel, 951.684.4543.

Hardscape: MGR Concrete, mgrconcreteinc.com.

Pool: Gary and Sons, garyandsons.net.

A PRECIOUS GEM

Page 60

Refrigerator: SMEG, smeg.com

Wall unit in living room: vintage 1961 Cadovius

Art in dining room: Sandi Calistro, sandicalistro.com.

Divider screens outside: AllModern, allmodern.com.

Bullet planters: Hip Haven, hiphaven.com.

BARBIE DREAM HOME

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Refrigerator, kitchen backsplash tile, kitchen peninsula tile: Wayfair, wayfair.com.

Dining room chandelier: Litfad, Litfad.com.

Dining chairs: Amazon, Amazon.com.

Bedroom flamingo accent wallpaper: Spoon Flower, spoonflower.com.

Nightstands and dresser: Home Depot, homedepot.com.

Bed, Bedroom heart light, bathroom pendant lights, bathroom terrazzo tile, outdoor patio tile: Wayfair, wayfair.com.

Blanche Canvas Portrait: Modsens, Modsens.com.

Bathroom pendant light: Litfad, Litfad.com.

Bathroom baskets, pink flamingo lawn decor: Amazon, Amazon.com.

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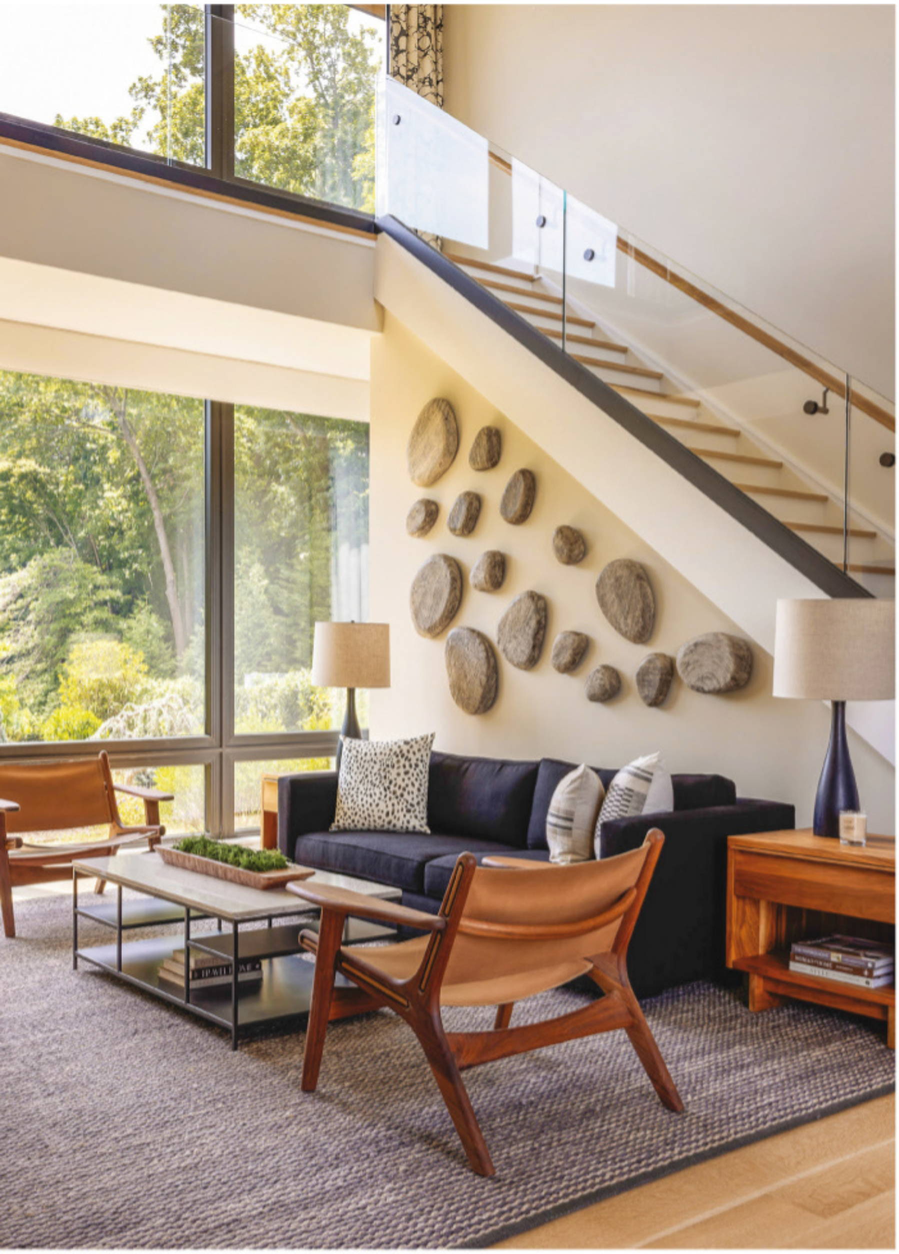

Rose Praino says of her design methodology: "Ultimately, NeuroSensory Design™ is about designing for longevity and well-being. By integrating natural elements, sensory cues, and thoughtful proportions, this living space becomes more than a backdrop—it becomes a restorative experience that supports the people who inhabit it."

WHEN INTERIOR DESIGNER Rose Praino sets out to design a space, her process is qualitative and quanititave. As creative director at YDC Design based in NYC, her goal is to create a design that can support emotional well-being and intuitive nervous system regulation. Each room seeks to integrate soft material transitions, acoustic quiet, and a grounded palette to help calm the mind and body.

"In this space, my goal was to create a living environment that feels both grounded and expansive, something that nourishes the senses while supporting everyday life," Rose says of this Setauket, New York new build. "NeuroSensory Design™ is about more than how a room looks; it's about how it makes you feel on a neurological level. Here, I leaned into natural light, organic textures, and balanced contrast to evoke calm, focus, and connection."

The MCM principal of inside-out connection weaves perfectly with her approach. "The soaring windows invite nature inward, allowing the green of the landscape to become a living artwork that shifts with the seasons," she says. "The sculptural wall installation introduces a tactile element—rounded, stone-like forms that reference the natural world while offering a sense of rhythm and movement. These organic gestures balance the clean architectural lines, softening the geometry and creating harmony between the built environment and the outdoors."

"Furniture was selected for both function and feeling," she adds. "The mix of warm wood, supple leather, and tailored upholstery engages multiple senses—sight, touch, even scent over time—anchoring the space in comfort without sacrificing sophistication. Layered lighting adds another sensory dimension, ensuring the room can transition fluidly from morning brightness to evening intimacy."

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